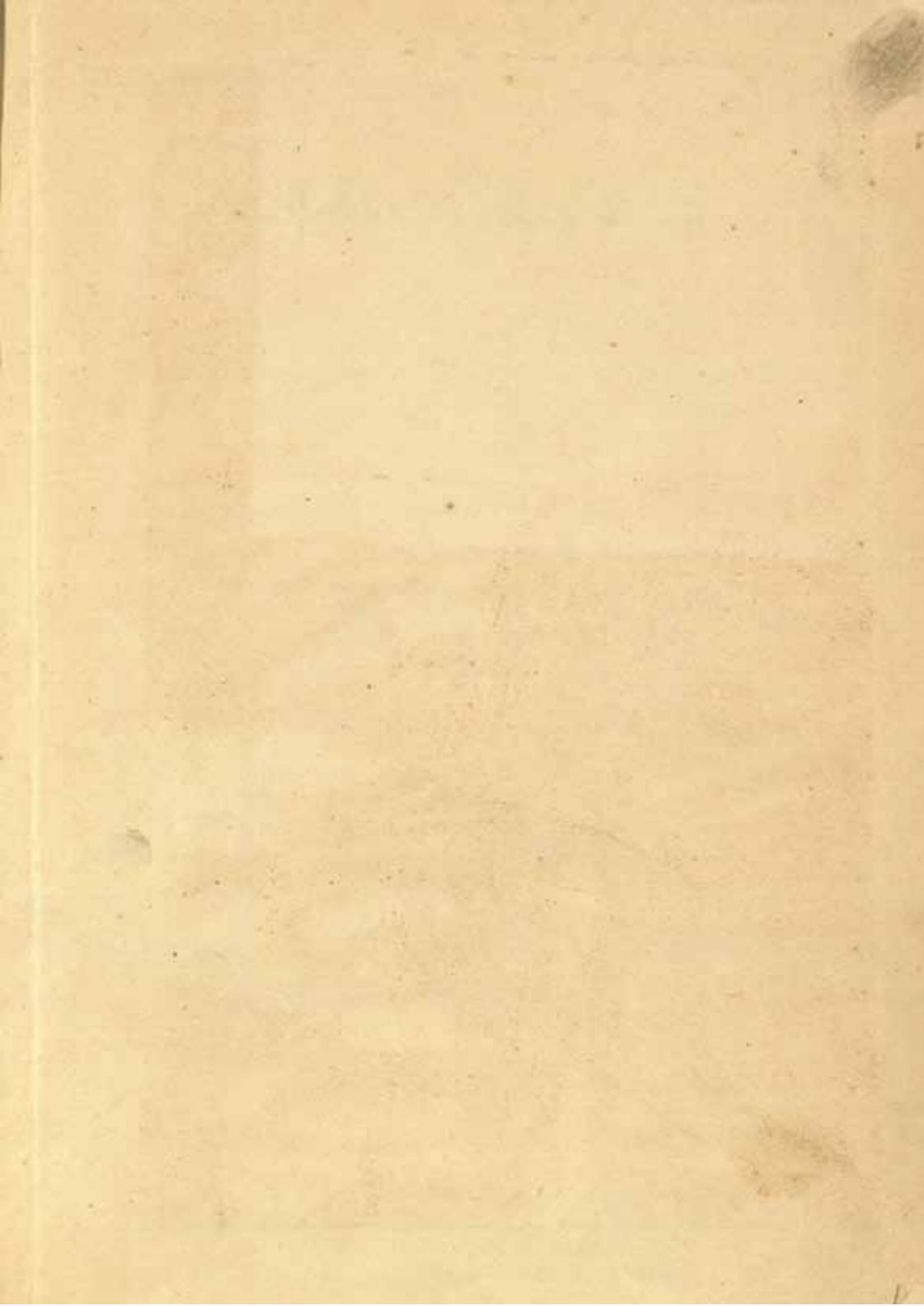


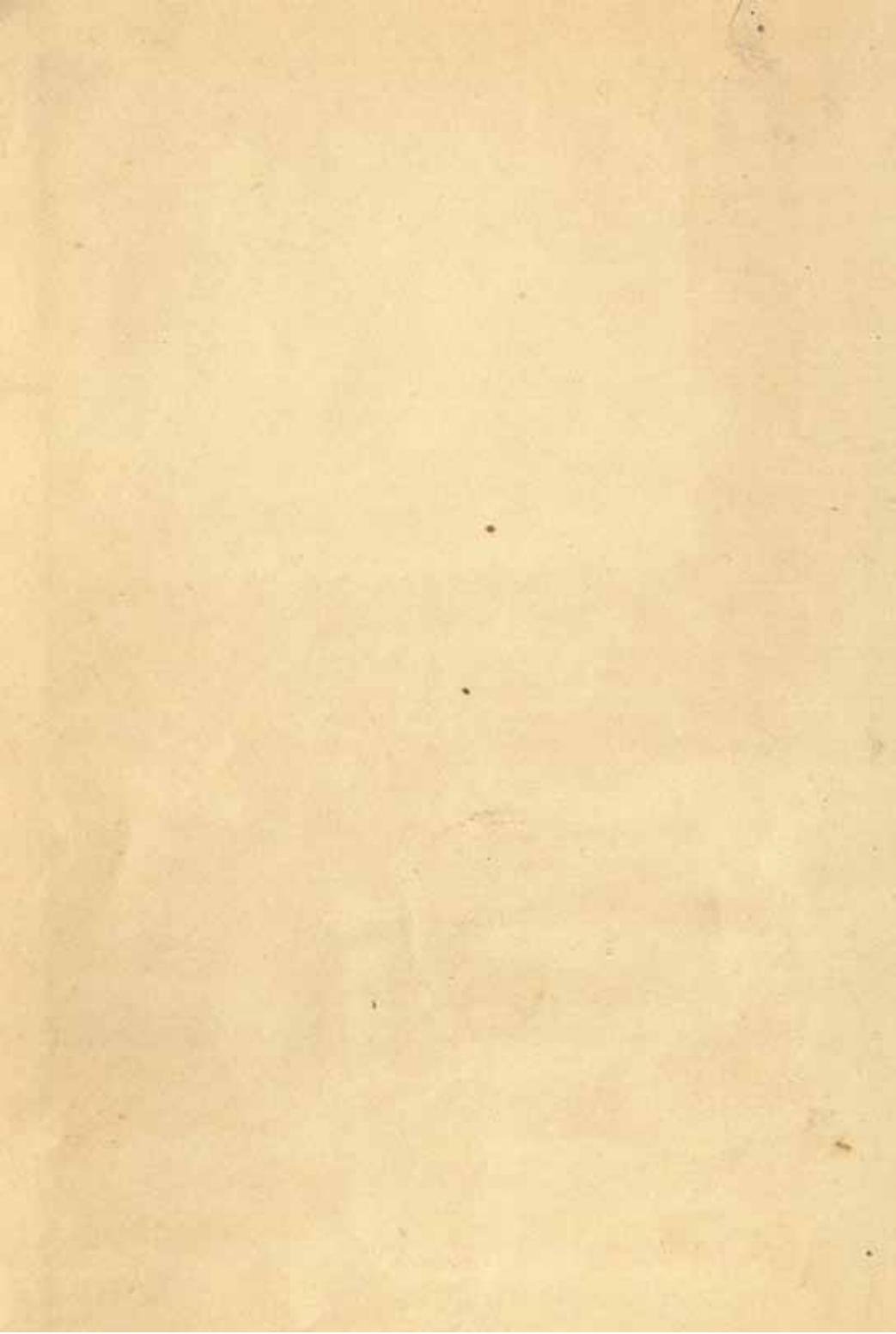
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RURAL PROFILES

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RURAL PROFILES

PREFACE

The occasion for printing the present volume arose, when the rural number of The Eastern Anthropologist, Vol. VIII, Nos. 3 and 4 containing the papers included in the volume, was sold out within an incredibly short time. It was myopic on our part not to have foreseen the possibility of a bigger demand for the Journal and we printed the usual number of copies. The demand for more copies could be met either by reprinting the Journal or by printing separately the articles contained in it. We preferred the latter alternative, and we are now in a position to supply copies as would be required by our colleagues and institutions working in the field of rural research or interested in it.

The contributors to the Volume are as detailed below :

DR. N. S. REDDY is working in the Kanpur Social Survey as Deputy Director. He has worked for more than three years in Andhra among the depressed castes there, and his comparative study of the two Adi-Dravida castes, *viz.*, the Mala and the Madiga, is 'one of the best structural studies we have in India'. His book is now in the Press. Dr. Reddy joined the Senapur team of the Cornell-India project where he worked for several months till he relinquished his post there, to take up the Kanpur assignment.

DAVID HOPPER is a Canadian national working for his doctorate at Cornell. He came to India to work in the Senapur scheme of the Cornell-India project. He has worked in the village for more than a year and is now back in the States. He is an eminent economist and has made special study of rural economy and demographic problems.

BRYCE RYAN is the author of 'Caste in Modern Ceylon'. He was for several years Chairman and Professor of Sociology at the Colombo University. Later on he joined Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., as Visiting Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. A year ago, he joined Wayne University as Professor of Sociology and now he is Chairman of the Department of Sociology, at the Miami University, Florida, U.S.A. His co-authors were either his colleagues or field personnel.

DR. S. C. DUBE was a lecturer in Political Science, Hislop College, Nagpur; he then joined the Political Science Department at Lucknow in the same capacity. Later on he was appointed to the Department of Sociology, Osmania University, Hyderabad-Deccan. Dr. Dube was for a year lecturer at the School of Oriental and African

Studies, London, and is now a member of the field team at Rankhandi, Cornell-Lucknow project. He is the author of two books, one on the Kamar, an ethnographic monograph and the other one on 'Indian Village', the latter published in London.

EDWIN EAMES is a Cornell graduate, came to Lucknow as a Fulbright grantee, affiliated to the Department of Anthropology. Later he received a Ford Foundation Overseas Fellowship and has worked partly in Senapur and partly in Gohana Kallan; he is now back in the States.

PROF. M. N. SRINIVAS is Head of the Department of Sociology, Baroda University. He was sometime lecturer in Sociology, at Oxford. A distinguished field sociologist, besides a large number of research papers, he has two important books to his credit, "Marriage and Family in Mysore" and "Religion and Society among the Coorgs." He is the recipient of the W. H. R. Rivers' Medal awarded by the Royal Anthropological Institute, London.

MR. MAX RALLIS is a Cornell professor who came to India for a methodological project. He has worked in various parts of the world in different assignments, most of them under the auspices of the Cornell University.

DR. M. R. GOODALL was a Visiting Professor at Delhi and Lucknow Universities was co-director of the Cornell-Lucknow Research Project for a year and is now back to the States. He is now working in the Claremont College, California and is an expert on Public Administration.

DR. BALJNATH PURI is a senior lecturer in Ancient Indian History, Lucknow University. He received his B. Litt and doctorate degrees from Oxford, and has been working on Indian Village Polity in ancient India.

MR. M. C. PRADHAN, MR. CHANDRA SEN and MR. SUNIL K. MISRA are field research assistants in Gohana Kallan, a centre, run by the Cornell-Lucknow project and have been working under the supervision of the editor.

Rural Profiles, as published now, will be continued and we expect to bring out further volumes in near future. I am grateful to the executive of the Ethnographic & Folk Culture Society, for the ready response I had received from them, which enabled me to reprint the articles. Mr. T. N. Madan and Miss Uma Chaturvedi, as usual, did give me generous help in the making of the manuscript and seeing it through.

D. N. Majumdar

INTRODUCTION

Rural Studies in Past by Economists ; Present Need and Future Scope for Work by Anthropologists.

At no time in the long and colourful history of India, has so much attention been focussed on the problems of rural life as is manifest today. True, the economists have for long been discussing the manifold problems of the villagers, and have drawn up plans for the amelioration and rehabilitation of rural life. Some have idolised our village life so much so, that the cries of 'go back to the village' have still an emotional appeal to many. Time and again the effervescence evaporates and is seldom converted into action. But now, as never before, the villages and our rural problems are coming into the limelight. India is a land of villages, and is likely to remain so. Half a million villages, or more, shelter eighty percent of the Indian population, so that to discover India one must needs know the villages and the people who live in them.

It is indeed a pity that inspite of the preponderant role the villages play in the economy and culture of India, we possess a thin literature on Indian rural life. This explains some of the ambitious titles authors give to their village studies generalising from the study of a particular village the configuration of our rural life and its profiles.

We have so far been content to leave the business of study and evaluation of rural life and its multifarious problems in the hands of economists. We have been told by the latter about the over-whelming importance of agriculture, the low income of the villagers, the resultant gnawing poverty and the appalling rural indebtedness; also of the extravagant and ceremonial expenditure of the rural people and mal-nutrition and under-nutrition common to the village diet. Indeed, the work of the economists is greatly valued; but about the social matrix of the villages, they appear to have merely scratched the surface. They tell us, no doubt, about the rigidity of the caste-structure, of the competence and incompetence of the many social groups, of the landlord-tenant relationship, the extent of sub-infeudation, of scattered and fragmented holdings resulting from an outmoded inheritance code. But we have little or no information about social mobility, structure and function of caste hierarchy, of migration and caste dynamics. We are dissatisfied with our literary excursions into the village, for the information we derive thereby does not give a total picture of rural life. It leaves us cold and bare, for the heart of the village is not touched. There is a complete lack of first-hand studies of our rural life and the cultural setting that provides the stage for rural action. We, therefore, think merely in terms of the economic approach, of raising the levels of living, of

reorganising the employment structure, cottage industries, seasonal labour and Co-operative societies. Not that these are not important, or that we have not spotted the right maladies, but the approach to rural life has not been a total one. To take an example, there is a general complacency about village solidarity and integration, but those of us who have been working on rural problems cannot escape a predicament between 'the presumption of pronouncing on everything and the despair of comprehending anything'. On the one hand we note the flux and the shine of an orientation in our rural life, on the other we face an integrated matrix, in which the castes live dovetailed and symbiotically order their social life. Caste still determines occupational status, restricts social mobility, sanctions status relationship and orders social distance. Customs regulate the limits of individual initiative and social capillarity. Marriages are confined within the caste, rites and usages are traditionally prescribed and income and expenditure are patterned according to the status of the castes. Reciprocity, cultural exchanges, mutual obligations, all these are still determined according to the known warps and woofs of rural life, and economic problems are integrated with those of structure and function. Even education does not make big dents in the rock of century-old prejudices; wealth provides comfort but does not always bestow a social standing or social approval, and caste distance is not narrowed by material success or even higher standards of living, income and pattern of consumption. Not that changes are not evident or manifest; they have come fast enough, and are likely to come even faster, but there is a lag between aspiration and achievement, between material success and social acceptance. The villages can be understood well only in the context of the cultural life lived by the people and that is how the inter-locked and inter-dependent rural life, baffles social engineers, as it cannot be easily geared to planned economy. It is here that the economists need the assistance of sociologists and anthropologists. Together they must pool their knowledge, technical competence and enthusiasm to change the face of the country-side and reorient the attitudes and values that still stand in the way of a levelling up.

Anthropologists particularly have been interested in microcosmic studies, unlike the economists whose interests are macrocosmic, so that the net-work of exchanges, social and cultural, that determine rural life, its attitudes and fulfilment, can be viewed in the context of the cultural matrix and of social ecology. This approach enables us to understand the basic structural patterns, and integrative factors of rural economy which certainly cannot be ignored in any ambitious scheme of planning or action therapy.

Sociologists and anthropologists have been preoccupied in India with their special interests, the former with urban life, city planning,

labour, housing, slum economy, social vices, crime, delinquency and demography; and the latter with tribal cultures, ethnography, acculturation and cultural dynamics, evolution and ethnology. This has given a sort of monopoly, as it were, to the economists who have in the interval perfected their technique and have begun to use quantitative data to understand and interpret the socio-economic problems of rural life. But these problems have been studied without any relevance to the cultural back-ground, so that the inter-relations that exist between different sets of social phenomena have to a large extent been ignored. The time has come when a holistic approach has to be worked out, in which interdisciplinary participation would be needed.

On account of our desire to uplift our villages and improve the lot of the common man who lives in the village, great emphasis has been laid on rural studies. Hence, anthropologists and sociologists who, with the experience of microcosmic field studies, possess a broad view of inter-relation of social phenomena and their inter-dependence, should take up rural assignments, define the scope and potentialities of their activities and evaluate the changes that have come into our rural life in the context of improved communications and the impact of technology on rural life.

Variety of the Changing Rural Scene ; Status Differentiation : Leadership ; Inter-caste Relations.

We have made sweeping generalisations regarding rural life and its problems. We have depicted village life as if the pattern was similar in all parts of the country. We have ignored the facts of alien invasions, different governments, varying religions and multiple levels of culture, as if they had little or no effect on our rural life. It is true that all parts of the country were not equally touched by social upheavals, invasions or conquest, but today we are becoming more and more aware of specific differences in different parts of the country. We know, however, the basic similarities in all villages and the personalities of villages as well. We know the common problems, and we also know the rough and ready prescriptions for our rural ills. What is needed in rural studies, today, is the shaping of effective scientific techniques of rural analysis to understand the problems of rural life in their wider contexts.

The status structure of our villages is in a fluid state. While still clinging to the traditional ways of eking out an income, the villager is today experiencing the impact of technology and competitive economy. Land is not in abundance, while the size of the family is on the increase. The artisan castes, no longer can secure a minimum level of living, out of their traditional occupation in the village and

from the *jajmans* whom they still cater to. They either migrate to centres of greater opportunities, or live a precarious existence. More people today are in the grip of the money-lender than ever before and cooperative societies cannot as yet size up the want and poverty of the villages. The channels of rural finance have changed their course. The abolition of the *zamindari* has dimmed the halo around the heads of the high caste men. They are nervous about losing their rights—rights which they have enjoyed from time immemorial—and they are not prepared to give in without a struggle. Fighting tooth and nail they are trying to maintain their hold on the village. If they have lost some rights, they still have wealth, and that means power. Why should they not use their wealth in new ways to strengthen their position of importance? So that many of them have adopted money lending as their profession, which till now was the much-maligned monopoly of the village-Bania. The breakdown of the status relations has deprived the artisan elements of the village of concessions in kind which helped now and then to relieve their chronic distress. They still yoke themselves to the village economy but they have been caught in deep furrows.

The relationship of status factors to the acceptance of innovations in dress, food and farm practices is important in the context of social change. A number of investigations carried out in various parts of the world on farm practices, for example, 'have high-lighted farm-ownership, education, income, size of the farm and social participation as being associated with the adoption of improved farm practices'. Contacts with urban centres, and improved communications are helping adoption of innovations. Leaders in community affairs are not useful in dissemination of new farm practices. 'On the other-hand innovators are not likely to be leaders in community affairs'. This is an area of study that must be given due consideration in planning and action research.

We are apt to isolate village leadership in its traditional setting. In the Indian villages of the past, leaders were born, but now in the new set up, it is not so. The frequency of leadership from sections or castes other than the dominant one, requires evaluation. Goods, today, are not necessarily delivered through the traditional leaders. The new leaders may not even be from the status groups, neither have they jumped into the scene by the spin of the coin. The social awareness of the people is the medium which fashions new leadership.

We have simplified the social structure of our country by equating it with the magic word 'caste'. Caste is no doubt a complex structure, but it is also a dynamic one. Three significant periods in caste history are worth mentioning. Caste as it was in the time of Manu, a fluid structure, flexible and mobile; vertical as well as horizontal features characterised caste as is understood in the context of

anuloma and *pratiloma* marriages i.e., marriages prescribed and those forbidden. This was the formulative period of the caste constitution. Caste in the medieval period became rigid and stereotyped. The rigidity encouraged fission, but circumscribed the chances of fusion. The challenge of the rigid caste system was met by religious revivalism in which sectarian and other types of castes emerged to accommodate deviants and aspirants after social status. A critical evaluation of the caste structure at this period would show the caste system as a cross between 'feudalism' and, the 'schism of the soul' to use a Toynbean phrase. Today caste-structure is fighting a battle of survival, as it were, and is mobilising forces and factors, that were once dormant or unintegrated. The saving factors are the not-too-clear lines of demarcation among the castes, between the higher and intermediate and between the latter and lower castes. The intermediate castes most of whom are artisans, usually bridge the disparities between the two ends of the caste ladder. The new trend in caste dynamics today, is a concerted move on the part of the backward and socially non-privileged castes to rearrange themselves on a horizontal plane instead of pressing their claims for accommodation in the hierarchical ladder. The hitherto voiceless castes are becoming articulate, even vocal, and are not prepared to accept the status differentials. The new orientation in the attitude of the non-privileged castes has already made social distance ineffective in many ways. If the trend continues, and it is likely to continue, it certainly augurs well for the future of the Indian caste structure.

In most of the villages in Uttar Pradesh, for example, the dominant element has been a particular caste, a Thakur, rarely a Brahmin or a Muslim pedigree family who has ruled the village and has kept the various castes on the rails, by organising a kind of interdependent and symbiotic relationship with the dominant caste at the apex of the pyramidal social structure, and a traditional division of function and services between the castes. The customary code of rural life with its pattern of obligations, its stress and strain, its virtues and vices, has functioned to maintain a status structure, however, inequitable its role might have been. There is to be noticed a passive conformity to the rural code of duties and services. Loyalty and cooperation that exist among the castes inhabiting a village have been, we are often told, always spontaneous, but a deeper knowledge of rural life reveals that this loyalty and cooperation are sometimes ordered. Political leadership has been on the caste pattern and in a village dominated by the Thakur, the leadership is in their hands. Consequent upon the abolition of the *zamindari* system and in villages with absentee landlords, the initiative for leadership has passed from the former leaders to the elders of the village, though even today the dominant caste or castes exert their influence and enjoy certain

privileges. The village today in most parts of the country is becoming a venue for trial of strength among numerically larger castes and inter village relations are being strengthened to keep the traditional status roles functioning. The lower castes in earlier days had some vertical mobility in the caste-ladder, but with the horizontal organisation in the villages today on intra-caste level, social mobility is also tending to be horizontal, so that a Chamar or a Pasi need not look up to the higher castes in the village for recognition of their social claims or aspirations, but they find in their caste organisation the key to social capillarity. This is a development which has become manifest in the process of cultural change.

To understand the complex nature of our rural assignment, I am referring to two problems, of water scarcity in two villages of Jaunsar Bawar, Chakrata Tehsil, Dehradun district, an area where the Department of Anthropology, Lucknow University, has set up a research centre for evaluation of cultural change, in the context of the community development project now functioning there. I shall state the problems and make an analytical appraisal, without mentioning any solution for obvious reasons.

Water Scarcity in Lohari—A Village in Jaunsar Bawar.

I. Problem

Nearly thirteen miles away from Chakrata, the Tehsil headquarters of Jaunsar Bawar, Dehradun district, U.P., lies the village Lohari, spread over an uneven stony ridge, five hundred feet below the lower Simla road. Lohari lies on an altitude between 6500 to 7000 ft. above the sea level. Throughout the year, whether it is summer or winter, no family in Lohari gets more than two or three *mashaks* (skin bags) of water a day, from the storage tank. It is not a problem of there being no water in Lohari. The existing source can be improved upon, and in lieu of it, other nearby sources can be tapped. Hence the question arises, why do the villagers not do anything to improve the situation?

II. The Course of Events

Prior to 1922, the village had only a woden drain, made of scooped out tree-trunks, to bring the water from the source to the storage-tank. Before the wooden drain was placed, the villagers used to go up to the source to take water. This wooden drain often leaked and the damaged parts had to be replaced as often.

In the early nineteen-twenties, the Government expressed a desire to help the people of the Jaunsar-Bawar region, in the matter of having a good water supply. The Government would provide the materials and the villagers should supply the labour. At this juncture,

the Tehsildar of Chakrata visited Lohari, and he on the request of the villagers, sanctioned a grant for the laying of a pipe-line from the source to the storage tank, in place of the wooden drain. The pipe-line was installed in 1922, and it worked smoothly for two decades, needing only minor repairs now and then. But roundabout 1942 a major breakage was discovered, which could be mended only by a mechanic. By 1948, the pipe-line fell into disuse and the storage tank also became useless. A few attempts to get hold of a mechanic from Jaunsar having failed, the villagers ultimately went back to the primitive method of going up to the source to get water.

During the latter half of 1950, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Chakrata visited the village, and seeing the pipe-line unused, placed before them the choice either to get the pipe-line repaired or to give it away to another village. The second alternative was asking too much of them. How could the pipe-line be given to another village for nothing? So hurried decisions were made, and a new pipe-line installed in 1951 by a mechanic from Jaunsar who also changed the site of the reservoir to a level higher than that of the previous one. Rs. 800/- was spent on the installation of the new pipe-line. Some villagers say that half the amount was contributed by the Government, while others informed us that the Government did not give any money, but gave materials worth Rs. 600/-. However they all agree on the point that the Rajputs, the Bajgis, and the Nathhs contributed Rs. 10/- per family and the Koltas Rs. 5/- per family to meet the expenses of constructing the new reservoir and laying the new pipe-line. The old pipe was an inch in diameter, but the new one had a half-inch diameter. New brooms sweep well, so it is with water-pipes. All went smoothly for a few months, and there was the old trouble again. The pipe leaked, and what more, the reservoir also leaked. All the blame was laid on the mechanic, and certainly he did deserve it all. A careful look at the reservoir showed that half the water coming through the pipe, flowed outside the reservoir. The bottom is not well-cemented, and so some water was absorbed by the earth. The reservoir was not maintained well. Leaves and dust found their way into it, and it was not cleaned often. Further, since it is on a high level, water did not flow into it easily.

No measures were taken by the villagers to get the pipe and the reservoir repaired, and they remain still in that state. "The villagers either have to be economical in the use of water, or go up to the source.

III. *Other Factors*

Whether there is an abundance of water or not, the Koltas always experience great difficulty in getting an adequate supply. While

a Rajput gets three *mashaks* a day, a Kolta gets rarely two *mashaks*, for he cannot draw water himself from the reservoir. If any Kolta is found doing so, he is fined. The right of drawing water is denied to the Koltas, with the support of weighty arguments.

Firstly, water is used for worship and religious ceremonies, and if it is polluted by the hands of a Kolta, an untouchable, the gods would be enraged.

Secondly, common belief has it that if a Kolta draws water from the storage tank, it would dry up. Why, evidence is brought forward to show that there has been such a case in the village, and the gods were appeased only after a sacrifice was offered to them.

Further, 15 years ago, there was the case of a Kolta woman who stealthily drew water from the reservoir, and died three days after committing the foolhardy act. Divine wrath vent itself in that pitiless manner.

Most of the Koltas agree to all these and calmly accept their lot in life, but there are a few who oppose the haughty Rajputs. 'The water comes from our God' say many Rajputs, "But God is for all" retorts a Kolta, with a shrug of his shoulders.

Some Rajputs say that it is a troublesome task for them to draw water for the Koltas, as though it is a pleasant task for the Kolta to wait near the reservoir or the source, fearing to ask a Rajput to draw water for him, lest he should be rebuffed. Many feel that it would be better to have a separate reservoir for the Koltas.

The Rajputs are those who have a say in all matters of the village and if any changes are to be made, it must be with the sanction of the Rajputs. But among the Rajputs themselves, there is a deplorable lack of unity. The *Sayana* who is looked upon as the co-ordinating head of the village, takes no initiative in any matter.

IV. Diagnostic Details

From what has been said so far, it is apparent that the villagers are disinterested in their own welfare. Whatever comes across their way, they accept, but never make any efforts themselves to improve their conditions. Whenever any change was wrought, it was because an external factor goaded them to action. It was not because the villagers wanted a better supply of water, but because the Government was supplying pipes free of cost to the villages, that the pipeline was for the first time installed in 1922. Again it was the S.D.M.'s threat that the pipe, if unused, would be removed to another village, and not their interest in the matter that made them get a new pipeline installed.

Now once more they are in their native lethargic and inactive state, waiting for some impelling force to rouse them to action and give them suggestions to improve the supply and distribution of

water. If no one steps forward to help these villagers, they will not help themselves. "What can we do? It is the fault of the mechanic", they say, as they "plod their weary way" up to the source with their *mashaks*, and there at the source, sits the Kolta with his *mashak* "waiting with patience, that wearies not" for a Rajput whose heart is not hardened.

The Reservoir that could not be Constructed

I. The Problem

Situated in an isolated and hilly spot about 25 miles to the West of Chakrata, and 5 or 6 miles above the river Tons which is the Western boundary of this region, the village of Bayala suffers from an acute shortage of water for nine or ten months in a year. In the remaining two or three months, the welcome showers supply the need.

Previously there were three sources of water supply in Bayala, of which one is about a mile down a valley but access to it is very difficult. Of the remaining two, one was said to belong to the Lakhtate Rajputs, though others were allowed to draw water from it at certain fixed times. However, the Lakhtate Rajputs, do not now enjoy this much envied monopoly for in 1924 the source was completely blocked by falling stones, thus leaving the village with only two sources, one of which lies deep down in the valley. The ownership of the other source is claimed by the Oniyan Rajputs and in summer they draw water from this source during the day. The other Rajputs fill their vessels here at night. As for the others, the men of the Badhoi caste and the one Brahmin family in the village can draw water at night. The Koltas and the Bajgis have to go down to the source in the valley, and "labour up the hill with weary steps and slow" carrying pitchers of water. Even the other villagers, except the Oniyan Rajputs are forced to go down to this source sometimes, because the water they get at the other sources, is not enough for their use. In the rainy season the source which is said to belong to the Oniyan Rajputs has enough water for all and anyone can draw water out of it, at any time, except the Bajgis and Koltas who have to wait patiently till a Rajput woman looks upon them with pity and compassion and draw water for them. The tender hearted Rajput women give preference to the Bajgis, so say the Koltas and hence the are the worst sufferers in this.

This being the situation something had to be done. As a result of the Community Development Project some of the neighbouring villages had been blessed with good reservoirs. Why should Bayala not have a similar reservoir, especially when there was a crying need for it? So the villagers decided to secure Government aid, to cons-

truct a cemented reservoir near the water-source, but the decision was nipped in the bud. The Oniyan Rajputs were furious. The water-source did not belong to the village. It belonged to them alone and out of sheer generosity they had allowed the others to use it. The water source was a gift to the Oniyan Rajputs from *Mahasu* deity. It was sacred to their God. How could the villagers build a cemented reservoir near the sacred spot and anger the deity? The very thought was blasphemous. Thus for fear of rousing the wrath of the deity, the village still suffers from water scarcity.

II. *The Course of Events*

The claim of the Oniyan Rajputs on this water source is based on a legend which goes as follows:—

Long, long ago when Bayala had no water at all, an Oniyan Rajput went to the temple of *Mahasu* near Hanol and beseeched the deity to give Bayala a water source. His prayers were accompanied by penance and mortifications. His supplications reached the ears of *Mahasu* who appeared to him and gave him a closed 'tumhi' (pitcher) commanding him not to open it till he reached Bayala. Back went the Oniyan Rajput with "a step that was light and a heart that was gay". But soon the intense heat of the sun made him tired and he was forced to rest awhile under the shade of a big tree near Kandoi school. An inquisitive passer-by, questioned him as to what the pitcher contained, and on learning the whole story laughed at him saying that most assuredly the deity was playing a joke on him. Doubt and misgiving filled the heart of the Rajput, and notwithstanding the deity's command, he opened the pitcher. Out of it glided off a snake and disappeared among the nearby rocks, where it was changed into a stream of water. Having lost the blessing, the Rajput went on to Bayala with a downcast face, still carrying the pitcher. When he reached the village, he threw away two grains of rice which he found inside the pitcher. Bayala was not left utterly helpless and destitute of water. At the spot where the two grains fell sprung a small spring and drops of water trickled into a ditch and that is the present source of water which the Oniyan Rajputs claim as their own, because it was a gift of *Mahasu* to one of their ancestors.

Sometimes between 1920 and 1922, the ditch was turned into a small tank, built only of stone slabs, and now the majority of the villagers want to convert the tank into a big reservoir, so that more water could be stored and nothing wasted. At present, as the water finds its way to the tank, much of it is absorbed by sand and mud, some falls outside the tank. To construct a good reservoir, cement will have to be used. To this the Oniyan Rajputs object saying that *Mahasu* will be angered if cement is used. The tank is square

in shape, each side 3 feet at the opening. It narrows down and the bottom is one square foot. The height is about seven feet.

Under the community Development Scheme, J, the Patwari, was asked to report on the water problem in the village. Accordingly he made enquiries about the matter and prepared an estimate of expenses for the necessary construction to ease the position. M. R., the Village Level Worker for Bayala, made another report and he encouraged the villagers to stand firm in their demand for Government aid.

In the last week of January 1954, the S.D.O. (Sub-Divisional officer) of the Chakrata Sub-division went to Bayala on an official tour. An application for the construction of the reservoir was submitted to him. The Koltas submitted a separate petition expressing the difficulties they experience to get water. The S.D.O. promised to help all of them, but the Koltas were threatened by the Oniyan Rajputs, that they will not be allowed to use the source in the valley also. So they apologised for submitting the petition and paid a fine of Re. 1/- to K. the leader of the Oniyan Rajputs. The Patwari, wished to get easy money from the villagers for submitting a report in favour of constructing the reservoir. He approached D. R the village *Sayana* for this and asked for Rs. 200/-. The *Sayana* would not comply with his request. At the same time, K. and his party submitted to the Patwari a report asserting their claim over the water-source and paid some consideration money, to support their application for the non-construction of the reservoir.

An order was issued to the Patwari from the *Tehsil* Office, asking him to consult all the villagers on the matter of constructing the reservoir. The Patwari without consulting the *Sayana* or any villagers, except the Oniyan Rajputs sent back a statement, with alleged forged signatures of the *Sayana* and other prominent villagers, that the watersource belonged to the deity and hence the reservoir cannot be constructed.

At this juncture, M. R., the V.L.W. arrived in the village, and the matter was taken up by him, but he could not do much because K submitted another application to the *Tehsildar*. B Singh, the *Sadar Sayana* was presented before the *Teshildar* as a representative of the villagers. D. R was in Chakrata by chance and when he appeared before the *Tehsildar*, he was told that he and the other prominent villagers had, by signing the Patwari's statement accepted the claims of the Oniyan Rajputs over the water source. D. R showed complete ignorance of the statement, but the *Tehsildar* could do nothing to help D. R and his party, for on the basis of the statement submitted by the Patwari with all the signatures he was forced to decide in favour of the Oniyan Rajputs. He told D. R that the only thing that could be done was to

file a civil suit for those forged signatures. But this was not done because it would involve a great deal of trouble and expense.

An application drafted by the school-teacher in consultation with several prominent villagers, was sent to Ashok Ashram for publication. An extract from this application was handed over to our investigators. In the last week of April 1955 the present V.L.W. convened a meeting of all those who were in favour of the construction of the reservoir. All but the five Oniyan Rajput families turned up.

III. *Diagnostic Details*

Thus a problem that can be solved, a trouble that can be removed, remains as it is, all because Mahasu's anger will be kindled. It is evident that all this hubbub about the deity's wrath is only a cloak to hide the real reason, and that is that the Oniyan Rajputs do not want to give up the privileges which they have enjoyed so long. They realise that a reservoir constructed there would mean more water available for all. Consequently they would lose their exclusive right of drawing water from the source in the day. This is what the other villagers feel about their objecting to construct the reservoir.

K. S and his party, clearly and firmly assert their claim. They say that last year the deity was consulted on this matter, through Ashoziya, a Rajput of Mantad village and the deity objected to any alteration in the tank, particularly to the use of lime or cement. The other party refused to believe this for when Ashoziya consulted the deity, there was no one else present. Further, though the Oniyan Rajputs claim the water source as theirs, the place where it is situated belongs to Bir Singh of Basrand and not to them. Moreover in keeping with the Jaunsar Bawar customs and traditions, any one who derives benefit from the property of another has to pay a nominal tax or fee to the owner for the use he makes of his property. But in this case, the Oniyan Rajputs do not get even a single pice from any of the villager who draws water from the source which they say is theirs, and so rightly the source is the common property of the village. This fact is further strengthened by the survey reports of 1872 and also of 1950-51, which state that the water-source is the property of the whole village community.

Fifty-five out of sixty families in the village are in favour of constructing the reservoir, but the other five families claim to have the deity Mahasu on their side, and as a result about 400 people are undergoing a great deal of suffering, due to the lack of a good water-supply. A pity indeed especially when the remedy is in their own hands.

The cases cited above and the diagnostic details that we have enumerated indicate in a broad way, the nature and size of rural problems. They are not all economic, they are also anthropological. A human approach to human problems is necessary and in that context a deeper knowledge of the structure and function of rural society and the values and attitudes of the people, must precede any action programme on community level. We propose no brakes on action therapy, but we need to understand problems before we undertake social engineering. Here anthropologists can be of much use, and their diagnosis, if not advice has an important bearing on the success or failure of community enterprises.

The papers that have been included in this volume attempt to describe rural profiles and they have a bearing on the shape and form, our rural life is expected to conform to. Apart from the importance of the subjects dealt with by individual authors, there is a competent discussion on the scope and methodology of rural studies and we expect that they will be useful to those who are thinking of a rural renascence and action programmes to forge it.

D.N.M

FUNCTIONAL RELATIONS OF LOHARS IN A NORTH INDIAN VILLAGE

(A study based on field work in an East U.P. Village during the first half of 1954)

N. S. REDDY

The village of Senapur, comprising about 300 households, is situated in Kerakat Tehsil of Jaunpur District in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. Like any other village, it is inhabited by several castes both high and low, whose diverse occupations, prescribed by tradition, answer most of the basic needs of the village. Smithery and carpentry in this place are undertaken by the Lohars who form a section of the artisan class of Viswakarmas. According to strict definition of tradition and also as supported by the etymological derivation, the Lohars are only blacksmiths, and Barhahis (another section of Viswakarmas) are carpenters. 'Lohar' means workers on 'loha' or metal, which in the context of the village agricultural needs has become equated with iron. But as the situation goes in these parts, the Barhahis are scarce and the Lohars work both on wood and iron. In Senapur, there is not even a single Barhahi family and hence the Lohars encompass the functions of the smith as well as of the carpenter.

The Lohars serve both the agricultural and household needs of the villagers. They make ploughs, yokes, hand chaff-cutters, sickles, grass-scrapers, pulleys, moat frames and bullock-carts. They perform all the work connected with the construction of houses and also make certain household effects like cots, planks, pegs etc. They also fix the mechanical chaff-cutters and sugar-cane presses on wood bases. Repairing these implements from time to time is an essential part of their work.

Whoever has some land to cultivate, be it as an owner-cultivator or cultivating tenant, needs the Lohar's services. Thus all the castes from Brahmins and Thakurs down to Chamars are served by them. The work of the Lohars brings them into two distinct types of service relations with the villagers. One is of an age-old, hereditary tenure, the type and the extent of work following a roughly defined routine pattern round the seasons of the year and the remuneration approximately fixed in the form of traditional perquisites. The make and repair of agricultural implements (excluding bullock-carts) fall under this category of service. The rest of the work is undertaken on a contractual level with indefinite tenure and piece-rate payments.

THE JAJMANI SYSTEM

All the work in the village falling under the first category, that is, the make and repair of agricultural implements is apportioned among the Lohars according to hereditary shares. Each Lohar family has an exclusive and inalienable right over its share of work which is not encroached upon by others. The agriculturists too are bound by the fixity of tenure which characterises this service relationship. So a certain group of cultivators continue to be served by a certain Lohar and his descendants. When a Lohar family multiplies and divides the work, each share comes to compass the work of fewer agriculturists unless they also multiply at the same rate. Of course when the latter multiply faster, the Lohar workers become responsible to a greater number of agricultural families, even though the extent of work may remain the same. The cultivators who offer the work are the *Jajmans* and the artisans are *Parjans*; so these service relations which are governed by a hereditary tenure are called *Jajman-parjan* relations.

The work that a *Jajman* expects of his Lohar *Parjan* is determined by the former's cultivated acreage started in terms of *ruvath* or yokes. A person having about fifteen *bighas* of land is said to have a yoke cultivation. That is what he can cultivate with a pair of bullocks. If the extent of one's land is between twenty and thirty *bighas*, for purposes of the Lohar's work it is rated as two yokes' cultivation. An acreage of less than ten *bighas* is taken as half yoke cultivation.

THE NATURE OF WORK AND REMUNERATION

A yoke cultivation is taken as the standard for prescribing the amount of work expected of a Lohar and the payment due to him. An agriculturist with one yoke cultivation expects the latter to make for him the following things: A new plough and a sickle are made every year. One *henga* (leveller), a *garsa* (hand chaff-cutter) and a *khurpi* (grass-scraper) are made once in three years. About five old sickles are sharpened before the harvesting period. The *garsa* and *khurpi* are sharpened once in a fortnight. If the agriculturist of one yoke's cultivation needs more new sickles he buys them from the bazar. He also buys the *parsa* (axe) in the bazar.

The making of the plough takes about two days for one man. A sickle takes about half an hour for two persons. On account of these two items, a Lohar family puts in about twenty-one man-hours of work. The leveller (*henga*) takes about six hours for one man. The chaff-cutter (*garsa*) takes two men two hours and the grass-scraper (*khurpi*) half an hour for two men. As these items are made

once in three years, the Lohar family puts in about four man-hours per year on this account.

The sharpening of chaff-cutter and grass-scraper together takes half an hour for two persons which means one man-hour every fortnight or twenty-four man-hours per year. Sharpening of about five sickles before harvesting season means about $2\frac{1}{2}$ man-hours. Once in a few years the Lohar is asked to make a pulley and fix the wooden structure needed for driving a moat. This involves a day's work. Besides, bound in this intimate association which has continuously run through generations, the Lohar *Parjan* can always be expected by his *Jajman* to attend to minor repairs of houses or of additional implements like the mechanical chaff-cutter or sugar-cane press, for which no additional payment is made. On the whole the Lohar puts in between sixty and seventy hours per year in the service of an agriculturist of one yoke cultivation under the *Jajmani* system.

For the above mentioned work, the Lohar receives the emoluments in the following way: Only twice in the year, that is, after the bi-yearly threshing, the *Jajman* pays the Lohar a fixed measure of grain. The remuneration offered at other times is not a precise quantity of grain but approximate doles of either handfuls of grain or bundles of corn. Thus an agriculturist of one yoke cultivation makes the following payments. At the beginning of the agricultural season (June-July), the cultivator, approaching the Lohar for a new plough, brings with him a platter containing one seer* of flour, a little of jaggery and turmeric. This is an offering to the Lohar in the name of God to ensure prosperity for the farmer who wields the plough, that is just to be made. When the lands are being sown, the Lohar approaches the farmer in his field everyday, and the latter holds a quantity of about half a seer between his two hands and doles out the same to the former. The sowing generally lasts for eight days. If the Lohar is not able to go to the field and receive this perquisite, called *ubaruua*, the cultivator sends to his home $2\frac{1}{2}$ seers of grain, which is less than what the Lohar would get in the field during the sowing season. When 'sati' and 'Sawan' are harvested in November (Bhadra), the farmer gives the Lohar two bundles of crop. Soon after the threshing is done, the Lohar is paid a measured quantity of ten seers. This payment is called 'jokhua' or 'paseri'.

In November (Pushya) when rice is harvested, he gets a bundle and again in March (Phalgun) when the crops of wheat, barely and peas are cut, he gets two bundles. A little later, as the threshing is completed he again gets a fixed measure of grain. What particular grain the Lohar gets from a cultivator who has sown a few varieties

*The term 'seer' in this paper refers to the local measure and not to the standard seer. Roughly two such local measures make one standard seer.

of crops is decided by mutual agreement and convenience. If the Lohar takes peas from some of his *Jajmans*, he may take barley from others. Generally he cannot get wheat, which is the prized grain. What the bundle from one cultivator yields may not be exactly the same as the one from another cultivator of the same acreage. The bundles that the Thakurs dole out are invariably smaller than those given by other castes. Each of the five bundles, from a Thakur cultivator of one yoke cultivation yields on the average about four seers, while a bundle from a member of any other caste yields about five seers. Thus from a Thakur of one yoke's cultivation the Lohar gets about forty seers of grain per year. From other castes he gets slightly more.

For a *Jajman* who has two yokes' cultivation, the Lohar has to do double the work described above and for an agriculturist of three yokes' cultivation, twice the work. For the latter he has to make every year three ploughs, three sickles, a pulley, a *garsa* and a *khurpi*. The number of implements sharpened now and then also increases in about the same ratio. The remuneration too is enhanced in equal proportion. Not only the measured quantity of grain given at the threshing season is proportionally increased but also the unmeasured payments keep pace with the increase in work. For instance, a *ryot* of two yokes' cultivation brings two seers of grain at the beginning of the season. When he is sowing, two of his ploughs lead the way for the two men that dribble the grain into the plough shares. From each one of them, the Lohar gets two handfuls. The size of the crop bundles also increases. A big *ryot* in the village asks his Lohar *Parjan* to take as big a bundle as he can carry. Such a bundle yields ten to fifteen seers. If the agriculturist has only a half yoke cultivation, the Lohar makes for him a sickle and a plough once in two years. The other implements too last him about twice as long as they do in the case of one yoke cultivator. The Lohar's emoluments too are accordingly halved.

Beyond the economic sphere too, a Lohar *Parjan* renders to his *Jajmans* a few essential services of ceremonial value. At the time of marriage of the *Jajman's* family, the Lohar *Parjan* makes the bridal seat and a decorative parrot constellation carved in wood. Whenever there is a special worship conducted in a *Jajman's* house, he makes a small low table on which the idols and votive offerings are installed. In the event of death, the Lohar *Parjan* makes the litter on which the dead body is carried. For work of this sort, the *Parjan* is remunerated by some grain or a new cloth.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF JAJMANI WORK

There are thirteen Lohar households in Senapur. But they constitute only 10 working units as far as *Jajmani* services are con-

cerned. (One Kisor Lohar whose wife and children live here, is settled in Calcutta since long and has no interest in the village *Jajmani* work. So his first cousin Birbal has under him the former's share of *Jajmani* work also. Barsati and Mithai (a minor) who are now living separately from their uncle Jagannath, have their *Jajmani* work jointly managed by the latter). The table below shows the distribution of *Jajmani* work among the Lohar families. As the table reveals, the Lohars of Senapur, besides serving all the agricultural families of Senapur, also have their *Jajmans* in some neighbouring villages like Panihar and Tuttia.

The number of *Jajmans* (caste-wise) and the extent of their cultivation in terms of yokes. The latter shown within brackets.

Name of Lohar.	Inside Senapur.							Outside Senapur					
	Brahmin	Thakur	Nonia.	Ahir	Chamar	Nai	Kohar	Kahar	Brahmin	Thakur	Ahir	Chamar	Total.
Ram Harak	4 (6)	6 (6 $\frac{1}{2}$)	4 (4 $\frac{1}{2}$)	1 ($\frac{1}{2}$)	14 (11 $\frac{1}{2}$)	—	—	—	—	6 (6)	— ($\frac{1}{2}$)	1 (35 $\frac{1}{2}$)	36
Sumaru	—	10 (16)	9 (5 $\frac{1}{2}$)	1 ($\frac{1}{2}$)	10 (5)	—	—	—	—	5 (5)	— (1)	2 (33)	37
Birbal	—	5 (4)	2 (3)	—	4 (2 $\frac{1}{2}$)	—	—	1 (1)	—	3 (5)	7 (3 $\frac{1}{2}$)	— (19)	22
Ram Rup	—	3 (3)	—	—	4 (3)	—	—	—	—	2 (3)	1 (1)	— (10)	10
Raj Rup	1 (2)	4 (4)	1 (1)	—	1 ($\frac{1}{2}$)	—	—	—	—	4 (3 $\frac{1}{2}$)	2 (1 $\frac{1}{2}$)	— (12 $\frac{1}{2}$)	13
Ram Nandan	—	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 ($\frac{1}{2}$)	2 (1)	—	—	—	—	2 (2)	— (2)	— (3 $\frac{1}{2}$)	7
Dukhran	—	3 (5 $\frac{1}{2}$)	2 (1)	1 ($\frac{1}{2}$)	1 ($\frac{1}{2}$)	—	—	—	—	—	— (—)	— (—)	7 (7 $\frac{1}{2}$)
Muneshwar	—	2 (2)	1 (1)	1 ($\frac{1}{2}$)	3 (2 $\frac{1}{2}$)	—	1 (1)	—	—	—	— (—)	— (—)	8 (7)
Jagannath	1 (1)	7 (9)	9 (6)	5 (3 $\frac{1}{2}$)	4 (2 $\frac{1}{2}$)	1 (1)	—	—	—	—	— (—)	— (—)	27 (23)
Ram Raj	—	12 (24)	5 (5)	12 (11)	7 (5)	1 (2)	—	—	2 (2)	7 (7 $\frac{1}{2}$)	— (1)	1 (57 $\frac{1}{2}$)	47

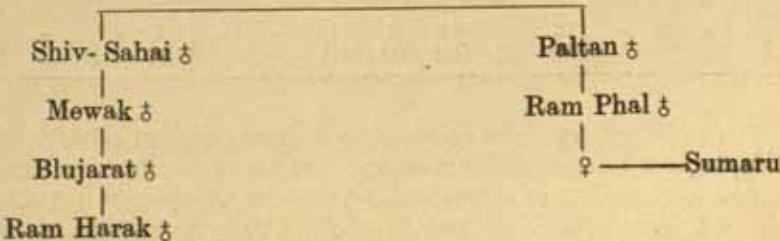
In the very nature of things, the *Jajmani* system of work in which the *Parjans* have hereditary shares has no pretensions to ensure any degree of equality of opportunity between the *parjan* families. The above table makes clear how widely differing quantums of work are

falling to the shares of different Lohars. The right to *Jajmani* work is treated as any other piece of property. It passes from father to son and is equally apportioned among brothers when they separate. In the case of a family with an only daughter, her husband succeeds to her father's rights.

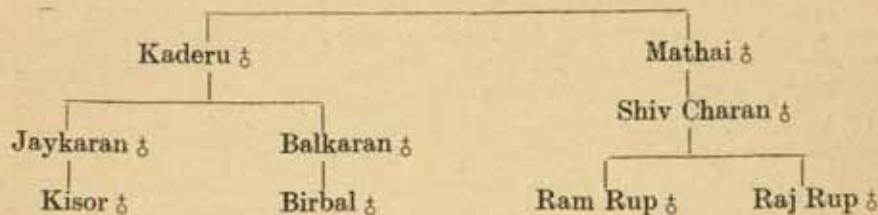
SUCCESSION TO PARJANS' RIGHTS

The whole series of succession to the *Parjans'* rights and the division of *Jajmani* work through the generations is not within living memory. But a part of it is yet traceable. Though several intermediate generations are altogether forgotten, the names of the two founding fathers who set up the first Lohar families in Senapur are still remembered. They were Narku and Hardayal, the first of whom served the northern half of the village and the second the southern half. It is broadly recognised that Ramnandan (including his two brothers, Muneshwar and Dukhran) and Jagannath (his nephews Mithai and Barsati included) and Ram Raj are the descendants of Narku. All the others are the descendants of Hardayal. It is significant that the aforementioned families who believe in their common descent from Narku still serve all the families in the northern half of the main settlement of Senapur, leaving the southern half to the rest of the Lohars (The main settlement of Senapur is split in two by a street that runs east-west in the centre of the village). It is also noteworthy that the extent of services undertaken by these three families together roughly balances against the amount of *Jajmani* work that falls to the share of the rest of the families. As can be seen from the table the descendants of Hardayal (the first five names) have 110 yokes of *Jajmani* work against the 100½ yokes, which is the share of Narku's descendants (the last five names).

Between these members who believe in their descent from Narku, no intermediate links of kinship could be traced. The other segment however yields some information on the genealogy of its members. There were three main lines of Hardayal's descendants. Ramharak and Sumaru's father-in-law represent two lines of descendants (Sumaru came from outside and settled down here after inheriting the rights of his father-in-law, Ram Phal whose only daughter he married).



In the third line of descendants there was an only daughter whose husband settled down in Senapur. He had two sons, Kaderu and Mathai. The former's grandsons are Kisor and Birbal and the latter's grandsons are Ramrup and Raj Rup.



The division of *Jajmani* work among these three lines of descendants of Hardayal is as follows. Sumaru has 33 yokes work which is slightly lesser than Ram Harak's $35\frac{1}{2}$ yokes. In the third line, the three units of Birbal, Ram Rup and Raj Rup together have $41\frac{1}{2}$ yokes work, which is higher than the work of either of the two branches. Birbal who represents one sub-branch of the third line has 19 yokes work against the $22\frac{1}{2}$ yokes work held by Ram Rup and Raj Rup together who represent a parallel sub-branch. Between the last two who are brothers and recently have separated, Raj Rup has $12\frac{1}{2}$ yokes work against Ram Rup's 10 yokes.

The above figures represent slight divergence from the ideal of absolute equality of shares in the division of *Jajmani* work between brothers. This is explained by two sets of factors. First, there is differential rating of *Jajmans* from the point of view of convenience and liberality. Second, there is the possibility of certain *Jajmans* adding to their acreage. When such addition is substantial it enhances the work and remuneration of the concerned *Parjans* while the other co-sharer's work may remain the same.

TRANSFERENCE OF PARJAN'S RIGHTS

Though in Senapur no Lohar has ever transferred even a part of his *Parjan* rights to another, its possibility in rare conditions is accepted. To illustrate such a possibility my informants gave me the instance of a Lohar at the neighbouring village of Murkha, leasing out some time ago a part of his *Jajmani* work to another member of his caste. Munni Lal Lohar's father at Murkha had a good amount of work in his own village. But he had to serve some more *Jajmans* in the village of Gonauli which was two miles away. He was unable to cope with the work and, after conferring with the *Jajmans* of

Sonauli, he transferred his work to one Mathai Lohar of Murari village. For some time this transference took the form of a lease and Mathai had been paying nominal rent to the preceeding incumbent whose rights he had come to wield. But later on this payment of rent was stopped and Mathai established himself as the permanent *Parjan* in the village.

Temporary substitution of *Parjans* is known in Senapur. This is one aspect of the Lohar caste functioning as a well-knit cooperative body. When one Lohar is by some reason unable to work, he can request a fellow member of his caste to undertake the work of his *Jajmans*. This is mainly an arrangement dependent on the goodwill of persons concerned. In such cases the Lohar who works on behalf of the other does not claim any remuneration. In September 1953 Sumaru Lohar fell ill for about 20 days. It was a busy season and his *Jajmans* were all in need of the Lohar's services. Ram Harak undertook all the work on Sumaru's behalf in addition to his own. But at the time of receiving remuneration from the *Jajmans*, he did not ask for any return either from the *Jajmans* or from his casteman. Dhukhram Lohar lives in Benaras for the greater part of the year. Though he keeps in touch with the *Jajmans* and returns home during the busy seasons for answering their needs, now and then in the slack season, the *Jajmans* are left without a *Parjan* to attend to their minor needs. At such times Dukharan's brothers Ram Nandan and Muneswar volunteer themselves to undertake to work without any thought of remuneration.

WORK OUTSIDE JAJMANI SYSTEM

Any work other than the make and repair of agricultural implements falls outside the *Jajmani* system. Such work is open to free competition among the Lohars. The carpentry that is needed in the construction of houses, major repairs of mechanical chaff-cutter and sugar-cane press and making of carts are outside the *Jajmani* system. Small repairs in the house or minor adjustments of the chaff-cutter and sugar-cane press are generally done by one's own Lohar *Parjan*. If the work takes less than an hour, the Lohar does not get any payment. If such work, however, extends over a few hours, he gets a nominal payment in grain that is sufficient for one meal. If the work outside the *Jajmani* system takes a whole day or more, he gets fixed wages.

Such work which is done on the basis of daily wage or piece rate payment is open to all and one can summon any Lohar to undertake it. If there are a few Lohars reputed to be specialists in certain crafts, they are invariably comissioned by one and all for that particular work. Thus, in this village, the two sons of Ram Raj Lohar,

Ramphera and Bulai undertake the major repairs of the sugar-cane presses. Ram Harak specialises in making bullock-carts and he enjoys a reputation for general workmanship in wood. For such other work as making beams, rafters, doors and windows, one is free to employ any Lohar of his choice.

Rudra Dutt Singh had been engaging a number of workers from different Lohar families to make the doors and windows for his new house. His own Lohar *Parjan* Ram Raj was not asked to undertake the responsibility for the work. Ram Harak, a better workman, had been asked to supervise it. Ram Raj's son used to go and work there as did many others, but with no special responsibility. He is just getting his wages as others do. But in this case the *Jajman* concerned was building a big modern building and went in for the best workmen available. Otherwise, if the work is of usual type and one's own *Parjan* is capable of fairly executing the job, generally he alone is entrusted with the work. When such a job is too big to be fulfilled by the *Parjan* concerned, he enlists the free hands from the other Lohar families and completes the work under his general responsibility.

In March last, Mangaru Singh wanted to build a house and asked his Lohar *Parjan* Raj Rup to take up the work of sawing wood to make rafters, doors, windows etc. Raj Rup was the lone adult in his family. So he enlisted the services of Ram Nandan, Muneshwar, Markhande (son of Ram Harak), Bhikari (son of Ram Rup) and Dewika (brother of Sumaru). The *Jajman* used to pay the fixed amount to Raj Rup who, in turn, shared it equally with the other workers. The other members of the team might drop out between the jobs, but Raj Rup was to be responsible for the execution of the whole work.

The daily wage a Lohar gets from the Thakurs for work outside the *Jajmani* system is far less than what he gets from other castes. If he works in a Thakur house, he gets four annas in cash per diem plus some provisions for food. Twice a day, he gets half a seer of barley flour and two *chataks* of *dal*. When he works for other castes he gets one rupee per day besides the above stated quantum of provisions. When they have to saw the wood even the Thakurs pay them, as the others do, at the rate of six rupees for a stretch of 100 cubits in length and half a foot in width. In this kind of work a Lohar worker can make about $1\frac{1}{2}$ rupees per day.

THE WORKING OF THE SYSTEM

Within the Lohar caste there is not even a slight murmur of protest against the *Jajmani* pattern of work, but on the other hand there is a positive resolve to maintain this system in its traditional

form. It is one of the main functions of the Lohar Caste Panchayat to ensure that no *Parjan* encroaches on the rights of another. In Senapur, no such violation of each other's right seems to have ever happened in recent memory. But when such a violation occurred in the nearby village of Marhi, the caste *Panchyat* of the area came down with a heavy hand and fixed the offender in his former place.

If such a system which from one point of view smacks of selfish guarding of individual interests, is working smoothly, it is because of the caste solidarity and the generous cooperation that obtains among the members of the Lohar caste to the extent of one undertaking a job on behalf of the other without seeking any remuneration. It is common for a Lohar entrusted with a big job outside the *Jajmani* system to share it with the fellow members of his caste on an equal footing. It is also a day-to-day occurrence that the few Lohars who have installed bellow-furnace freely offer their equipment to be made use of by other Lohars.

While this is so the Lohar's relations with their *Jajmans* particularly of the Thakur caste are not entirely free of friction. The Thakurs were the Zemindars and until recently held proprietary rights over the village lands. With the abolition of Zemindari system a change in the relative status of the castes came into being. Many of the Lohars who were only tenants-at-will have now acquired absolute title to the lands they were cultivating. They were also supremely conscious of this change. When once I questioned a Lohar whose tenant he was, he said, "I am my own tenant". A corresponding readjustment of attitudes has not come among the Thakurs. They are unable to forget that even the land where the other castes built their houses was theirs and it was at their mercy that the artisans held small patches of rent-free lands besides cultivating some more fields as tenants. So they still pay the Lohars lower wages and lesser quantity of customary payments than what the other castes do. The Lohars resent it though their resentment has not taken the form of an open protest.

There is an undefined element entering into the *Jajman-Parjan* obligations. Certain of the services the *Jajmans* expect of the *Parjans* are well defined, but certain others are not. For instance, what exactly constitutes minor household repairs within the *Jajmani* system is not clear. The extent of work concerning such items is mainly dependent on mutual goodwill. The repair of bullock-carts was not an integral part of *Jajmani* work some decades ago, but has gradually come to be treated as such of late. Not all the *Jajmans*, but only few of them, have carts and so there could not be a general prescription applicable for the whole village of items of services including the repair of carts. The mechanical chaff-cutter and the sugar-cane press have found their way into the village and their

minor repairs have come to be treated as a part of *Jajmani* work. These appliances too are in the possession of only a section of the *Jajmans*. A generous *Jajman*, who is prepared to offer additional measure of customary payment in lieu of the extra jobs, can take willing work from the *Parjan*. But generosity is largely shrinking and the Zemindars are in a mood of revenge. This has an obvious effect on the *Parjan's* attitude.

Besides, the *Parjan* in the present set-up occupies two levels of employment status. On the one hand there is the *Jajmani* system which ensures security of service but also implies imperative demands from an inexorable duty toward the *Jajmans*. On the other hand, there is extra *Jajmani* work which is casual and where the *Lohar* occupies the position of an independent artisan and a self-employer, who has a right to work or not to work as per his convenience and inclination. But this distinction which exists in theory often fades out in practice. The attitudes emanating from the first sphere are projected on to the second, whenever it suits the *Jajmans*. This means when a *Jajman* thinks that it is to his advantage to engage his own *Parjan* even for a job outside the *Jajmani* system, the latter is forced to take up his work regardless of his inclination and on terms dictated by the former. This is so, while the *Jajman* does take advantage of the casual nature of the work outside the *Jajmani* system to engage someone other than his own *Parjan* when that suits him. Thus the *Jajman* makes the best of both the worlds and the *Parjan* is left to grumble ineffectually.

There is also another element of friction. Sometimes two or more *Jajmans* of a *Lohar* demand his services at the same time. It is impossible to satisfy all of them at once. Whoever is served later gets enraged and takes the *Lohar* to task. In the middle of February 1954 an influential Thakur, who was a *Jajman* of Ram Raj *Lohar*, engaged a number of *Lohars* for wood-work in the construction of a big house. Ram Raj's son Bulai was one of them. One day another *Jajman* of this *Lohar* family summoned the *Parjan* for the repair of the sugar-cane press. As Bulai was the only available member of the family at the time, he was summoned for this job. This delayed him in reporting himself at the former's place where he was working along with other *Lohars*. This enraged the Thakur who took out his shoe and thrashed the *Lohar* without waiting for an explanation. In this case, the *Lohar* was working on a non-*Jajmani* item of work on terms of daily wages and it was open for the Thakur to ask him either not to work for that day to reduce the remuneration in proportion to the loss of time. But he chose to manhandle the *Parjan* betraying the attitude of a man towards his serf.

On 25th April, 1954 another member of the same *Lohar* *Jajman* was belaboured by a number of Thakurs. Another powerful *jajman*

needed the service of this *Parjan* for the repair of his bullock-cart. The head of the *Parjan* family viz., Ram Raj Lohar was on that day engaged in some work at the house of another *Jajman* in the nearby village of Panihar. His elder son Ram Pher was ill and unable to respond to the *Jajman's* call. This was taken for contumacy and the *Jajman* brought a batch of Thakur youth with him and mauled Ram Pher Lohar. Unless the *Jajmans* themselves fit their demands into some workable scheme of priorities and observe a fair distinction between the spheres of work where the *Parjan* is duty-bound and where he is not, the Lohars are bound to be stifled by conflicting pressures.

SEASONAL LABOUR CYCLES IN AN EASTERN UTTAR PRADESH VILLAGE¹

W. DAVID HOPPER²

One of the characteristics of any agricultural society is the need for a "stand-by" labour force to fill the sudden demands for manpower that are implicit in the cycle of ploughing, seeding and harvest. In the so-called western countries these peaks have been cushioned by the increasing mechanization of the farm labour force and it is the machine rather than the man that is idle between the seasonal swings of great activity and the time when a farmer "watches the crop grow". Indian agriculture, on the other hand, is still largely dependent on hand techniques and with few exceptions most Indian agriculturalists experience the pressure for additional labour to sow, irrigate or harvest a crop. In practice this pressure has been traditionally met by a multitude of villagers who are employed for a few weeks of the year and under- or unemployed for the remaining time; yet without this multitude to draw upon India's agricultural industry would be non-existent.

That seasonal rural unemployment is one of the basic problems of India's villages is generally conceded, only the magnitude and remedy appear open to debate. In this paper the author proposes to discuss only the problem of magnitude as it emerges from daily studies of the activity of a village as it was recorded from February 17th, 1954 to the end of the year, forty-five weeks in all.

THE VILLAGE, ITS PEOPLE, AND THEIR LABOUR

The village, that was the scene of this study is located in Eastern Uttar Pradesh about 24 miles north of Banaras. There are roughly 2,200 persons living in the village and dependent on 1,100 acres of cultivated land for their livelihood. The *rabi* crop provides the main income of the village and about 800 acres are devoted to the production of barley, pea, wheat, gram, etc. But this crop is supplemented with close to 400 acres of *kharif* cultivation and sugar cane, the last acting as the main cash crop of the village. Most of the

¹ This is a short preliminary report of research into the yearly labour patterns of a medium size village. The report is confined to an analysis of 45 weeks of data and deals with the activity pattern for the village as a whole. The author plans to publish a future paper covering a full year's study and dealing with many aspects of village labour that are beyond the scope of the present report.

² The author wishes to express his gratitude to the Social Science Research Council for the fellowship that financed this research, and to the Cornell University India Program for providing a field station and facilities for the research staff. In addition thanks are due to Rudra Datt Singh for his advice, suggestions and comments on both the research and this paper, and due also to Dharam Deo Singh for so ably bearing the burden of the daily interviews along with his many other works. The mistakes in the manuscript and the opinions expressed are, of course, the entire responsibility of the author.

crop land is irrigated from either tanks or wells, however, the tanks are few in number and during recent years many have been totally or partially reclaimed and converted to crop land, as a result this source of irrigation water is reliable for only a couple of months following the last heavy monsoon rain. The main source of irrigation water is provided by the several masonry wells in the village which are utilized by means of a moat and bullocks. Such a method is slow and inefficient, but the irrigation of the *rabi* crop at the end of November and early December accounts for the absorption of 65% of the available labour and brings the closest approach to full employment experienced by the village during the year.

The population of the village is representative of 24 castes, although the Thakurs, Chamars, Ahirs and Noniya have between them over 75% of the total. The population that served as a basis for the daily samples used in this study was primarily the 730 males between the ages of 14 and 74 that provide the bulk of the village labour. This population was classified into three strata: Landlords, containing the Thakurs and Brahmins; Service group, including the Nai, Dhobi, Kahar, Kohar, Gonr, Teli, Lohar, Barhai, Bari, Kalavar, Bhant, Kandu, and various bamboo workers and sweepers; Agricultural workers, containing Chamar, Ahir, Khatik, Bhar and Noniya. The last strata, Agricultural workers, covers 53.5% of the male population while the Service group holds 18.8% of the population and the landlord strata covers the remaining 27.7%.

The main impact of the agricultural cycle falls on the Landlord and Agricultural groups, although increasingly the Service group have been demanding land and devoting their time to farming. The present study showed that on the basis of a full 45 week average the service group spent over 15% of their time engaged in agricultural operations, and upto 40% of available time was allocated to the needs of *rabi* sowing and harvest. This is not surprising for it has long been realized that many of the Service castes are losing their function in the village because of an inability to compete with externally produced items that are now available in most market towns. Indeed in the village under study, several of these castes are no longer engaged in their traditional occupations and are forced to rely on agriculture as a means of survival³. This group also showed

³ See, Eames, E., "Some aspects of Urban Migration from a Village in North Central India", *Eastern Anthropologist*, Vol. VIII, No. 1, for a summary of some of the migration patterns from village to city. The article shows that 32.5% of the migrants from "Madhopur" were from the group the present author classed as Service. Extending Eames' findings to the village covered in the present paper it should be noted that the Service castes with 18.8% of the male population provided 32.5% of the migrants, the Landlord castes with 27.7% of the population gave the same percentage, and the Agricultural castes with 53.5% of the population were the least mobile, providing only 35% of the group who found employment in urban centers.

the largest percentage of available time when nothing was done, with over 18% of the work periods analysed in the 45 weeks showing complete unemployment. Idleness reached its peak in mid-monsoon with over 30% of the group unemployed, and for no two peak period was unemployment less than 8% of available time. On the whole, however, non-seasonal outlets for employment were more available to this group than to either of the other two, and while average productive activity showed fluctuations around 43% the picture was one of steadier employment than that enjoyed by the other groups.

The agricultural workers, as would be expected, showed periods of intense activity and long stretches when the group was either idle or "making work". Unemployment for the agricultural labourers averages lower than for the service group, running about 13% of possible labour time with fluctuations to 23% at mid-monsoon and down to 3% at *rabi* irrigation time. On the average this group was productively active slightly more than 46% of the time, but between the peaks when 65% (at *rabi* harvest in March) to 78% (at *rabi* sowing and irrigation in November and December) of the workers are actively employed, there were five months when employment averaged less than 30% of available time.

Productive employment for this group was available from two sources, the work opportunities provided by the landlords, and the requirements of the small land holdings most of the group have been given by the land owners as part payment of the labour employed by them. Since most of these holdings are suited to the *rabi* crop, the land owner's peak demands for labour are coincident with the needs of the workers' own fields and frequently the landlords are left short of their full labour requirements. The land owning class has reacted to this situation by developing an interest in labour saving implements, and currently the few new devices that have been introduced to the village are regarded as beneficial by both groups. However if this trend continues and the introduction and maintenance of new devices becomes a permanent feature of village capital expenditure it will pose a serious threat to the livelihood of the agricultural group, for in the 45 weeks covered by the survey an average of 19% of this group's available time was spent as labour employed by the land owners, and during the lowest period of total employment from mid-July to mid-August, self employment was below 10% while landlord employment was between 15 and 18%.

The landlord group was, on the average, the least employed of the village. Slightly over 37% of this group's time went to the generation of the gross annual income of the village, and of this amount 15% was devoted to the supervision of employed labour. Both productive activity and supervision showed marked seasonality with the *rabi* seeding and harvest periods providing for a total employment

of 60% of available time, 80% of which consisted of labour supervision, and mid-monsoon activities claiming 27% of total time of which 65% was supervision. Unemployment in this group averaged just under 17% of available labour periods and showed marked seasonality climbing to over 25% during the monsoon and dropping as low as 5% in November and December.

THE STUDY AND ITS METHOD

The study of labour patterns outlined in this article was undertaken as a part of a larger study in the structural aspects of a village economy, and was designed to fill three needs of such a village analysis: first, to give a picture of seasonal employment and the use that is made of time; secondly, to give an indication of the coefficients implied by the village technology; and thirdly, to indicate the capital use and wage structure of the society. Of these three aims only the first is analyzed in this paper, but it should be recognized that the other two needs were present when the daily random samples were selected, and operated to force a dispersal of interviews among each of the various castes of the village.

The study consisted of interviews with 6 to ^{8⁴} people per day who were asked questions relating to their activities the previous two days. The interviewees were chosen at random from the male population of the village, although an average of one interview per day was with a female⁵. Pre-tests showed that reliable information about activities beyond "yesterday" and "the day before yesterday" could not be elicited from many of the lower castes and illiterates in the village, thus the interviews confined themselves to responses about these two days. It was also shown on the pre-tests that most of the lower castes and many of the high castes had trouble breaking their work into hour periods but had little trouble answering about the traditional village wage periods that revolve around two meetings per day—the "morning" and "afternoon". Actually the pre-test and subsequent interviews pointed to a strong tendency to space work and effort to the duration of the period rather than to the needs of the job, and there were many cases reported where similar work was performed in the same period of time but one labourer being 30% or 40% more efficient than the other.

⁴ Because this study was part of a larger work it was necessarily responsive to operations connected with other surveys and studies; during the course of the village research alterations in the methodology of one of the other studies made it advisable to increase the labour interviews from 6 to 8 per day, or from 42 to 56 per week, accordingly the first 29 weeks reported in this paper are based on 42 interviews per week and after the 29th week on 56 interviews per week.

⁵ This meant that in one week's interviewing for 42 interviews, 35 men were covered or slightly less than 5% of the total male population.

The interviewing was done by a Thakur boy who is resident in the village, and a graduate from Agra University. Since the questionnaire was developed in consultation with him, and he was thoroughly grounded in the aims of the study, it was felt that he was capable of handling the job with a minimum of supervision after the initial weeks. The author does not feel that this trust was misplaced.

The sample was controlled so that each week from fifteen to twenty percent of the randomly chosen respondents were from the service castes, twenty-five to thirty percent from the landlord group, and fifty to fifty-five from the agricultural castes. Care was taken to see that each of the six different localities, or *bastis*, in the village were represented within the records of any two-week period, and the same respondent was not allowed to repeat for one or two weeks depending upon the relative population of the respondent's caste.

The tabulation forming the basis of this article was done by dividing the activity in each survey period according to the following categories :

1. *Productive work on agriculture*.—This included all work that was done in connection with the production, harvest, and preparation of a crop for final consumption or sale. It includes ploughing, harvest, sowing, grinding grain (if done in the village), supervision of labour, visiting fields, manuring land, etc.

2. *Productive work other than agriculture*.—This category covers all other work done in the village and relating to the production of the village gross annual product, except for the work on the care and feeding of the animal population which is covered in category 3. It includes work on various capital items such as the construction of houses, the making of implements, digging wells, etc., as well as labour given as personal services by the various service castes or the Brahmin. Periods spent hawking or selling were included if people availed themselves of the offered services, but such items as attending *pujas* in other than a serving capacity, begging, and looking for lost animals were included in category 5.

These two categories were defined with the aim of covering all the *intra-village* activity (except that in category 3) that generates the gross annual product. The categories exclude such items as travel for marketing the crop, or absence from the village because of temporary work and to this extent are not fully inclusive of all activity connected with the gross income of the society.

3. *Animal care and Feeding*.—This category embraces all the work directed toward the welfare and maintenance of the village animal population. There are about 780 mature bullocks, cows and buffaloes in the village and the collecting of fodder, cutting of chaff and feeding this population acts as the major buffer for employment. With one exception all herding activities were included here, however,

if the herding was done for the purpose of manuring land it was included in category 1.

4. *Travel*.—This category covers all periods spent outside the village. It includes travel to visit sick relatives, to attend court cases (high among the landlords), to market produce or purchase items from the bazar town, to attend marriage or other ceremonies in other villages, or to accept temporary employment or provide services in another village.

5. *Miscellaneous activities*.—Tabulated in this section are all activities relating to the social life of the village which do not add to its economic product. Domestic duties, the performance of death and other rites, the attendance at *pujas* in a non-serving capacity, the various recreational activities of the village, the entertaining of guests, the collection of wages, begging, and work on village affairs such as *Panchayat* meetings etc., are included in this category.

6. *Illness*.—Covered in this category are all periods where nothing was done because of ill health. It also covers a few cases where some work was done but with low productivity explained by ill health and in these cases part of a period was allocated to the category dealing with the work done and part to this category.

7. *Unemployed*.—This includes all the periods where the respondent reported complete idleness for no apparent reason. Sometimes respondents reported that they were sleeping and if the sleep appeared to have no good cause such as convalescence following an illness, or during the morning following a night of crop watching it was allocated to either category 5 or 6, otherwise it was entered as a period of unemployment.

In many cases the respondent who was engaged in several tasks during one of the interview periods was also to give an approximate time division for each task, in these cases parts of a period were allocated according to the breakdown given by the questionnaire.

The total period in each category from one week's interviewing of all groups was then merged in a two-week moving total to cover the 45 weeks of study. The percentage each category was of the total periods surveyed in any two weeks was calculated and provides the ordinate plots for figure 1, the abscissa plots are the mid-points for the corresponding two-week period.

THE VILLAGE LABOUR CYCLE

Sugar pressing, *gur* making and the beginning of the *rabi* harvest occupied 32% of the available time of the villagers during the first two weeks of the study. By the third week in March the *rabi* harvest had absorbed over 54% of the reported time periods—the peak for the late spring. The decline in productive activity following the

rabi work was offset in early to mid-April with the preparations for, and the planting of, sugar cane. Employment remained above 45% until the third week in April and about 40% until the second week

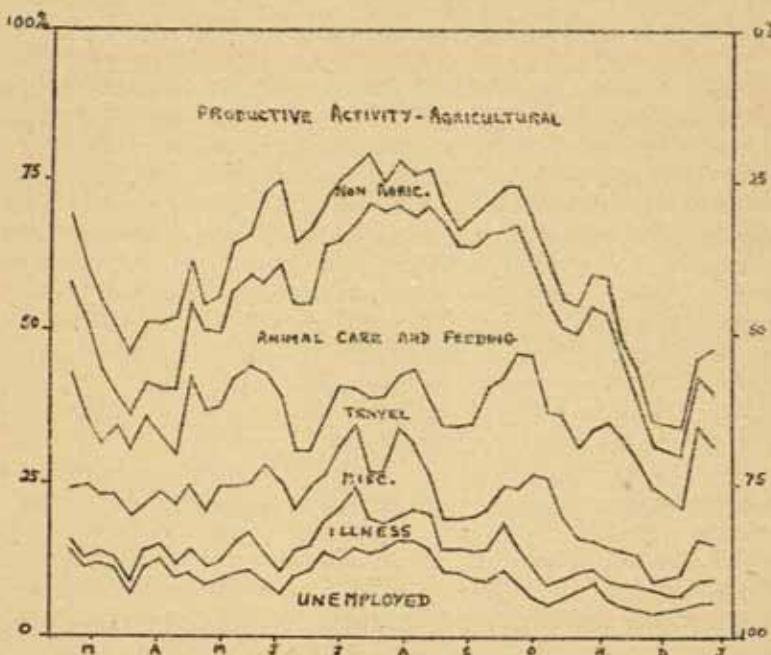


FIG. 1 TOTAL VILLAGE ACTIVITY PATTERN
FEBRUARY 20th TO DECEMBER 31st 1954

in May. The first serious drop in agricultural activity followed this and employment skidded to under 26% of available time. The second irrigation of the cane crop along with hoeing gave a mid-June boost to employment, but this was short lived and except for slight activity connected with the *kharif* crop employment remained below 30% until the transplantation of paddy and the *savan* and maize harvest in middle to late August when it increased to 33%, only to drop again. Sustained increases in activity did not occur until late September when preparations were made with the final ploughings for the *rabi* seeding, and by mid-October employment in these activities had reached to 45% of the surveyed periods. The drop in work following the *rabi* sowing was reversed by the needs of the paddy harvest and these merged with work on *rabi* irrigation in late November and early December to push employment to its yearly high of 65%. Sugar cane again cushioned the decline from this

high and many labourers were shifted from the irrigation moat to the sugar *kolhu* as the cane was harvested, pressed and converted to *gur*.

Productive activity other than agriculture demonstrated no distinct seasonal variation and averaged about 7.5% of the periods reported for the entire 45 weeks. Of this average the service castes supplied 5.3% and the remainder was made up of the non-agricultural tasks performed by the landlords or agricultural workers—primarily activities relating to construction of houses, sheds, bricks or wells.

Animal care and feeding account for most of the activity in the slack agricultural periods. It occupies only 6% of the reported periods at the height of the *rabi* harvest in March, yet rises to between 25 and 30% by mid-monsoon when it frequently exceeds total productive activity. Food shortages at the close of the monsoon period account for part of this rise, but there can be little doubt that this category holds the activity of the under-employed labour force that is indispensable in March and December, and it is here that a true measure of disguised unemployment is to be found. December's animal care takes over 8% of the available periods, and in the author's opinion the needs of the village animals could be met throughout the year with approximately this proportion of total available time.

A comparison of labour coefficients for the low and high periods of activity devoted to animal care and feeding shows that at the height of the *rabi* activities in late November and early December one man-day covers the herding, collection of fodder, and the cutting of chaff for an average of 9.8 animals, while at mid-monsoon one man-day covers an average of 2.2 animals.

Travel is something that is indulged in by many villagers at the least excuse. The radius is generally within 12 miles of the village, although the landlord group cover a much more extensive territory. Shopping in the market town that is four miles from the villages is the most persistent reason given for spending short periods outside the village, but attendance at marriages, marketing the village crop, visiting relatives and looking after land holdings in other villages all go to make up for the average of 13% of the available time that is spent outside the village. In general travel demonstrates no distinct seasonal pattern, although May and June show the effects of marriage time. It seems likely that travel declines during the monsoon for in the early part of July it showed a marked decline, but during the year of the study the monsoon was abnormally light so travel remained high throughout a dry August and early September. There is no strong relation between time spent away from the village and productive activity, but during the slack periods people travelled to "visit relatives" while at other times business or social obligations were prominent reasons for leaving the village. There is a slight correlation ($r=+0.3$) between travel and illness with family members

frequently going in search of medicine, or visiting sick relatives outside the village.

Miscellaneous activities require little comment, they took an averaged 11% of surveyed time and indicated little seasonality. Three places of marked increase may be of interest; the first was in mid-April running until mid-June and consisted, in the main, of the time spent entertaining wedding guests; the second was in August and indicated the effects of the many Savan *pujas* held in the village; the third was in first half of October and is accounted for by the large *mela* and Ram Lila held in the village for the two weeks of Dashahara which attracts both the villagers and many of their relatives who must be entertained between the afternoons at the *mela* grounds.

The sixth category, illness, shows a marked seasonal cycle with the village most healthy in February and early March. The beginning of the hot weather and the strong *lū*, toward the end of April brings fever and eye trouble that claims a toll of 3% of the available working time of the village. The monsoon saw an increase in malaria and other moisture responsive diseases and resulted in a mid-July illness rate of 10% of available time. As mentioned before, the 1954 monsoon delivered only half the usual precipitation and this may have been the reason the village was spared any severe outbreaks of malaria, typhoid or cholera usually expected in late August and September. Nevertheless, the illness declined from July's high to a fairly constant 5 or 6% until the cooler weather in mid-October when it dropped to 3%. Cold weather in December saw an increase again to 5 and 6% of the periods studied and the incidence was especially high among the lower economic groups of the village who reported over 90% of the illness recorded.

The final pattern of village activity relates to the periods of idleness—when the respondents reported doing “nothing”. This is a measure of full unemployment in the society and it runs from a high of 12 to 15% at mid-monsoon to a low of 4% during the first couple of weeks in December. There is little that can be said about this category, in a few cases it was responsive to the weather with an up-swing of idleness during and immediately following rain, but the vast majority of the periods were totally unproductive for the reason given by many—“I have no work to do.”

CONCLUSIONS

This study divided the village population into three groups—landlord, service and agricultural workers. The agricultural group had the highest average employment and the least average idleness, the service group were second highest in average employment for the 45 weeks studied, but had the highest average and most sustained

idleness, the landlord group had the least employment and while average unemployment was slightly less than that for the service group it was subject to much wider variation with seasonal periods when it was as low as 5% of total time available to the group.

The peak periods of employment in agricultural operations occurred in March and November-December and were associated with work on the *rabi* crop. However, sugar cane provided an important source of "off season" employment as did work connected with the *kharif* crop.

Productive activity devoted to works other than agriculture accounted for an average of 7.5% of all the time periods studied in any two weeks and while the weekly proportion of time devoted to this activity showed some fluctuation, the variations gave no indication of a seasonal pattern.

Animal care, herding and feeding absorbed the surplus population of the village during the slack in agricultural work. Time spent in this category accounted for 6 to 8% of the available periods during the peaks of agricultural activity, but rose to over 30% at mid-monsoon—the time of lowest productive employment. Labour efficiency in animal care averaged 9.8 animals per-man-day during the times of intense work on the *rabi* crop, but dropped to 2.2 animals per day when other productive employment was lowest.

Time spent outside the village in marketing, visiting relatives, etc. indicated no strong seasonal trend, but was slightly associated with the illness in the village.

Eleven percent of the surveyed time was spent in miscellaneous activities like attending *pujas* or village *melas*, taking part in festivals, entertaining guests, etc., and showed no marked seasonal trend.

Illness in the village was definitely seasonal with up-swings at the onset of hot weather, the monsoon, and the sharp cold of December.

Total unemployment in the village averaged 9.5% of the surveyed periods and reached its maximum at mid-monsoon when over 15% of the reported periods were idle, and its minimum in December when all but 4% of the people were either active or ill.

THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM OF A CEYLON JUNGLE VILLAGE

BRYCE RYAN, CHANDRA ARULPRAGASAM AND CUDA BIBILE

Ceylon is still a land of extensive forest and scrub in which village folk are influenced, and sometimes dominated, by jungle ecology. Very roughly the jungle regions correspond to the areas subject to the northeast monsoon and relatively unaffected by the southwest. This includes a great part of the island. Throughout the Northern Province, exclusive of the Jaffna Peninsula, the great North Central Province and much of Uva, and parts of the Northwestern and Eastern Provinces, man lives in constant adjustment to the "dry-zone" jungle with their highly seasonal rainfall¹. Throughout most of this vast region villagers live in their small communities close by the artificial lakes or tanks in which the seasonal rains are stored. Here they engage in permanent agriculture, usually paddy cultivation and often some horticultural crops, e.g., coconuts and jac. The surrounding jungle remains as a supplement to the proceeds of village cultivation usually through *chena* plots (slash-and-burn, "fire agriculture") in the surrounding scrub or forest. Villages vary in their relative dependence upon permanent village fields and the *chena*. Extreme dependence upon the jungle as is found in nomadic, migratory bands wherein roving cultivation is mixed with gathering and hunting is nearly extinct in Ceylon. Most jungle dwellers live in settled villages where the permanent paddy fields are viewed as the core of economic life. The general force of social change has been toward the diminished importance of shifting cultivation, and government land and conservation policies act toward that end. However, the village described in the present report is one of those which while permanently settled still has its major dependence upon the surrounding jungle.

The village of Bulupitiya is in the Wellasa Division of Uva Province, one of the more isolated, wild, and rugged areas within the dry zone. Fourteen miles northeast from the market town of Bibile, Bulupitiya lies at the end of a very rough cart track from which sprout footpaths which ultimately converge on a roadway entering the jungle from the east coast. Along these trails lie a few more or less settled Sinhalese villages and also remnants of Vedda communities described by the Seligmans many years ago².

¹ See further, Elsie K. Cook, *A Geography of Ceylon* (MacMillan); and Bryce Ryan, "Socio Cultural Regions of Ceylon" *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 15, No. 1, March 1950, pp. 3-19.

² See Seligman, C. J. and Seligman, B. Z., *The Veddas* (Cambridge University Press; 1911).

Throughout this region, jungle gathering, hunting, and migratory agriculture are the foundations of economy. Bulupitiya enjoys a relative prosperity, and large population (115 persons in 1951) mainly because of permanent paddy fields in supplement to *chena* and gathering. Some of the fields are located in the now abandoned village of Nilgala to the south where some years ago "the three day fever" ravaged the settlement and led survivors to build their homes in Bulupitiya and other villages. As a jungle crossroad Bulupitiya is also showing some minute signs of gain as a breaking point between head and cart transportation. This village is less dominated by jungle production than are most of its neighbours. Its economic system has three major levels, migratory fire agriculture, forest hunting and gathering, and settled cultivation. Of these, fire agriculture or *chena* is the most basic. Yet the *chena* life is but one phase of man's intimate integration with the jungle and its creatures. To the jungle he turns for meat, which in this area is widely eaten. If the need for money is urgent, the *aralu* nut, used in Ayurvedic medicine, may be gathered in the park-like stretches (*talawa*) encroaching upon the forests. Here too is a source of thatching for his roof, the *illuk* grass, which as hardy encroacher upon burned over jungle land is also his bitter enemy. Even the villager's comings and goings are regulated by the fear of nightfall in an elephant infested jungle, and his supernaturalism is weighted by protections from its hazards. His ethos is permeated by jungle lore in which the *chena* complex holds such a central place that much of life is geared to its demands.

The *chena* season begins in the latter part of July with the discussion of lands to be chosen for the coming season. Now men will be cleaning freshly cut poles to be used as handles for the *katties* (heavy blades which can be given full arm swings) for use in clearing. Wherever a group gathers, men talk of the season to come, and, through informal gatherings, some consensus is reached regarding the locale of the season's work. Normally most of the village cultivators try to form a single *yaya*, *i.e.*, a contiguous area for individual plots. Rarely will the *yaya* be more than two miles from the village and normally it will be land not cultivated during the preceding seven years. A list of the *chenas* to be used must be forwarded by the village headman to the Divisional Revenue Officer for official processing. Since Crown lands are involved, the sanction of the state is necessary. Usually a household, typically the nuclear family, cultivates three acres or less as their unit.

Throughout July the sun bears down unsparingly and the southwest monsoon, robbed of its moisture by mountains to the west, brings drying winds. It is in this season that brush and small trees must be hacked down with the primitive *katty*, a process which often takes

a full month of hard labor. During this period the workers usually sleep in their village homes, rising very early and returning home as the afternoon heat reaches its height. For a man who also cultivates paddy in the Nilgala fields this is a straining season indeed, for he may have to spend his nights in the paddy fields, six miles away, guarding them from the jungle animals and work the *chena* by day.

After felling, the brush and small trees are left for a period of not more than two weeks preparatory to the burn, and during this relaxed time, hunting and searching for honey is common. When leaves have dried sufficiently for burning, the *chena* is fired in the direction of the wind. A successful burn is important and an inopportune shift in wind or unseasonable rain may prevent thorough sweep of the fire and seriously disarrange further processes which should be closely integrated with the seasons. Larger logs are pulled out for use in fencing, while unburned stumps and large trees are left standing in the fields.

Fencing the *yaya* is the next operational phase. A double circle of posts is driven into the ground so that a foot wide border is created. Between the posts of this dual circle, logs are stacked to form a strong log fence to a height of four or five feet. This, the villagers intend to be resistant to wild animals. Inside the circle, on the fields, watch-huts are constructed and now, by the end of August, the cultivator is ready for the season of growth.

Throughout the preparation of fields, work is carried out by men working in an institutionalized cooperative-collective relationship. *Chena* locations are decided through informal agreement, although cliques within the village may not follow the majority. Within the *yaya*, locations are determined by close friendships but (in instances of dispute) choice of location always rests with the older man. One small cluster of families of equal status but on bad terms with the rest of the village typically choose their own *yaya* without regard to the others. Such schisms, as well as the pattern of adjacency within a *yaya* reflect lines of friendship more than kinship patterns. One man in the village, of lower caste than the others, selects his *chena* in isolation but nearby the *yaya* of another village entirely of his caste. The informal consensus system works toward the differentiation of the *chena* groups along the lines of social differentiation in the village so that each *yaya* is composed exclusively of an harmonious, egalitarian group. *Chena* location is an overt index to village schisms, reflecting as it does covert rifts, and antagonisms, as well as friendship cliques.

The major operations of felling, clearing, burning and fencing the entire area are done by collective work without regard to "individual property" rights within the area. Once the *yaya* is fenced,

the collective work system ceases. Individuals lightly fence their individual plots and from this point are on their own, although individual enterprise is tempered with the constant presence of ever helpful neighbours who are usually kinsmen as well. Systematic communal effort, however, is ended for the season. For this point, the nuclear family is capable of carrying on within the group's protective framework. Although *chenas* can be made on a strictly individualized basis, to do so is to court disaster. (The lower caste man operating in semi-isolation in 1950 failed to achieve a good burn and his single-handed efforts left him partially unprepared for the rains). The collective system during the period of most arduous labour is unquestionably more efficient.

And, indeed, the entire family carries on. Through the period of field clearing, the seeds for sowing are being prepared at home in the village. The wife plucks the maize kernels from the selected cobs, kurakkan, green gram, chilly pepper, gourd, and other seeds are sorted and sunned, the maize and kurakkan dampened and slightly sprouted. Typical crops include, beyond those mentioned above, manioc, hill paddy, limas, and gingerly. All of these are sown with precise regard to seasonability, maize coming earliest, in mid-September, and hill paddy, green gram, gingerly and chillies in November and December. The harvest of maize makes room for the sowing of hill paddy. Time tables tend to be somewhat earlier in villages without paddy fields and frequently the acreages handled are larger. Tillage is not practised, although for maize, seeds are dropped in small holes. Most seeds are broadcast on the earth.

The *chena* is now a family enterprise and if its distance from the village should be great, *i.e.*, over two miles, the entire family may move into it physically, setting up the household in a temporary hut. Commonly, however the village residence is maintained, the head with his eldest son guarding the fields at night and returning home in the morning. During the day the women and children watch over the fields. As the shoots begin to appear the threats of nature are imminent. Heavy rains may wash away the seedlings, elephants and particularly the wild boar may devastate the crop. "Watching" the fields carries with it the inspection and repair of fences, and of course as the growing crops are guarded later crops are also planted.

Much of the harvesting is done by women and children, who in the now cool weather may work throughout the day. If the family is also cultivating paddy fields, the head will likely spend his day at the paddy, prepare food for the family and possibly take it to them on the *chena*. For the paddy cultivating households the *chena* work becomes heavily a responsibility of the wife and the children, while the family head tends to the paddy cultivation, the home chores and then repairs to the *chena* where he must keep at least one eye

open for jungle marauders. Since the periods of sowing, growing and harvesting overlap so much, the period of the rains is one of never ending labor, and of movement between village and *chena*.

The harvest begins in late November, with maize, and continues until mid-March, although even then the chillies and manioc remain in the fields, and the *chena* soil serves as a storehouse for yams. Most harvesting is done on an informally cooperative basis by the women. Hill paddy cultivation and harvest is exclusively by the man, and it is for him to harvest manioc and visit the *chena* after it has been abandoned to dig a needed yam or collect a few chillies which may have been left there. Before the end of March the *chena* has ceased to be the focus of life, and if the family has been living on it, now they will return to the village. By the great Vesak holiday in April the family is home with its harvest.

Although paddy cultivation is held in secondary importance throughout this area most of the Bulupitiya households cultivate it, although each does not in every year. Only partially does its cultivation mesh neatly with the *chena* season. There are about 25 acres of permanent paddy land in Bulupitiya; their cultivation is dependent strictly upon the northeast monsoon rains. In addition a number of the families cultivate fields in the abandoned village of Nilgala where local irrigation along the Gal Oya River makes possible a dry season crop. Most of the lands in the village are owner operated, although ownership is frequently joint among related households who rotate operation of the fields.

The first operation on the paddy fields in the village is that of clearing the water channels, followed by tillage and "mudding" the fields. These must begin at about the time maize is being harvested on the *chenas*, i.e., December. Ploughing is never done; earth is turned with the heavy hoe (*mammoty*) then permitted to flood, first to kill weeds and a second time for mudding. Buffaloes are used to mud the fields; bunds are rebuilt, the fields drained and levelled. Normally, sprouted seed paddy is broadcast although some persons sow the dry ungerminated seed. Sowing is done by mid-January and by the time the shoots are about ground the *chena* harvest will be practically over.

The collective work pattern is found also in paddy cultivation. These lands though individually operated units are often contiguous with the similar units of kinsmen or neighbours. In all preparatory work, the holders of the various sub-plots within a contiguous area or *yaya*, work together without regard for internal boundaries. Sowing and harvesting, as in *chena* operation, is on a nuclear family basis.

The growing season is one during which the farmer need only watch for animals; man rarely interferes in the battle between the growing paddy and the weeds. As shoots appear, the farmer builds

his watch hut, and now freed from the demands of his *chena*, nights are spent guarding the paddy from deer and elk, and as the rice matures, the elephants. Children watch during the day and various devices, including the "pellet bow" are used to scare away the birds and animals³. Elephants are a serious menace though sometimes they may be discouraged by fences and the sting of bullets from the village man's muzzle loader, or by great din. Harvesting, at the latest, will be accomplished by the end of May leaving a period of relaxation before preparations for the next *chena*.

For those who cultivate the fields of Nilgala in the dry season, life is more rigorous for paddy watching must be done during the busiest of the *chena* months, *i.e.*, July and August. After a night of watching in the Nilgala fields, the Bulupitiya men will meet to walk together in the dawn six miles to their village where they will wash, eat, pick up *katties* and follow the rest of the village in the trek to the *chenas*. *Chena* comes first in the Bulupitiya scale of production values, but apart from this period there is a moderately successful dove-tailing of the two agricultural systems.

It is significant that even with the total disorganization of Nilgala as a community, indeed once a leading village of the region, the cultivation of its fields follows much the same organizational pattern found in the established village *chena* and paddy practices. At Nilgala cultivation is carried on by peasants coming from a number of villages, some more distant than Bulupitiya. Some of the cultivators own land here, although they fear to live in this cursed village area. Others rent from temples and private owners now scattered through the region. As might be expected contiguous plots are often operated by men coming from different villages, although all are of common caste and practically all in some degree of blood kin with each other one. Cooperative work groups are formed on a village of residence basis but the land prepared by each group bears little relationship to either the ownership or operational units. Property rights are watched however since when a gang works on a particular field, its operator does no field work but rather provides at his own expense, and cooks, the food for the entire party. As in other operations, when the fields are fenced and ready for sowing, individual property lines are re-established and work henceforward is individualized. When pressure of work is great, and the *chena* does not require them, Bulupitiya men often remain several days at a time in Nilgala. Here each village group lives collectively with pooled provisions. Living and working outside the home village and outside even the traditional routine of life has not lessened communal solidarities. These are not survivals from old Nilgala but are adaptations of the solidarities

³ Regarding the pellet bow, see Seligman and Seligman, *op. cit.*

and systems of cooperation common to a region. Outside jungle areas such as this, cooperative institutions are not highly developed among the rather individualistic Sinhalese. Here, in the constant battle against the jungle man appears to have more consciousness of dependence upon man than in seemingly more sophisticated communities. With institutions neatly adapted to his environment, the jungle is not tamed but it is rendered livable at low level of technological advancement.

With all the arduous labor, there is much time for relaxation and for other pursuits some of which are of mixed recreational and economic value. These, like the major economic facts of life, revolve about the jungle. About five men in Bulupitiya are regular hunters, although others hunt occasionally. It may be a matter of frame of mind more than amount of free time that the hunters are rarely paddy cultivators. In regional tradition it is settled cultivation which is new and, in absence of outside influence, disvalued. Although Bulupitiyans are devout Buddhists, hunting for meat is not considered sinful. Rarely does one hunt with commercial motives however. Patterns of hunt organization are well developed and varied, although, except for the electric torch, technical reliance is placed upon the primitive muzzle loader. Properly each household of the village should get a share of the bag and usually this is done except in reference to the small clique at odds with all others. There is undoubtedly some evasion of the obligation to share communally. It is interesting that, as the Seligmans described for the Vedda's the hunter's father is due a larger share than is the father-in-law. Meat is consumed fresh from the kill or may be dried over a slow fire for preservation.

Fishing is of less importance in Bulupitiya's economy than is hunting, in part because of the distance, six miles, to a perennial river. Like hunting it occurs chiefly in the inter *chena* season. In the true Vedda and other settlements without much permanent paddy land, both hunting and fishing have considerably more importance. These pursuits, not unlike *chena* cultivation are organized with an eye to congeniality among participating persons. From the proceeds of fishing, general division in a community is not usually expected, nor is fish preserved or usually sold. The most common methods of taking fish are through poisoning and spearing.

The pursuits discussed above are not considered sources of money income, although in fact some tracing may be done. These are the tasks of subsistence and few villagers have surplus for sale. The chief source of cash lies in gathering the nuts of the *aralu* tree which studs the *talawa* or parkland. The gathering season begins in April and ends by June, a period of lull in subsistence agricultural activities. Although men participate in gathering, especially in the less settled communities, this is typically an occupation of women and children.

The family collects its nuts at points in the jungle, leaves them to dry for several days on a flat rock, and then transports them by head to the village home. One man of Bulupitiya acts as agent for an outside trader who sends carts in from Bibile. In addition to *arulu* there is whispered gossip of *ganga* growing and trade, but this is an activity more of the past than of the present. Fruits, especially oranges and plantains, are grown by a few families but are not of general market significance.

Bulupitiyans do not fare well in the world of trade. Their only direct outlet is to Bibile, a small market centre, and once there with their small goods, they are at the mercy of the traders. If a cart full or pack-bull load of *arulu* is once transported, the peasant has no choice but to sell and the traders are not sufficiently competitive to assure a fair price. When the villager needs cash in the town he may borrow from the same trader—to repay the debt in goods often at a fraction of the current market price.

In regard to products typically sold, *arulu* and oranges, there is no sign of collective efforts as is true for all types of subsistence production.

It is no exaggeration to say that in this village the *chena* cycle is the core of economic life and to it other economic activities, and even the very organization of the community, are geared. This degree of jungle dominance is not typical in Ceylon and there are signs throughout this region of the persistent trend toward a reintegration of life around settled agriculture. Yet, as of 1951 there was no mistaking the central power of the *chena* complex, even in this village of settled residents. And the villagers defend it as any people defend their own way of life and their roots of communal organization. And indeed the cohesiveness of the community has roots in joint proprietorship of the jungles and its virtual requirement for collective effort. Even food habits in their consistency with this environment are unlike those of rice eating Sinhalese generally. Here a staple of diet is *talapa*, a dough ball made from kurakkan or maize flour. Whereas in the Sinhalese Low Country, paddy threshing is ritualized and solemn, here it is but another set of tasks in the season's work. There paddy is paramount, less for its commercial value than as the source of life. Here the villager says with some accuracy, that dependence on paddy is like putting all one's eggs in a basket, "but with *chena*, if all else fails we will at least have yams."

The *chena* economy is one of man's more extravagant abuses of nature and the people of this region recognize threats to their way of life. From the side of nature, the jungle base is decreasing through the encroachment of *illuk* grass as a successor to *chena* rather than simple jungle or scrub. *Illuk* is not readily eradicated by village methods. (Its invasion has already led to the migration of Veddas

from the Danigala area, east of Bulupitiya). But of more immediate concern, has been Ceylon government's policy in protection of the watershed and catchment area for the great Gal Oya dam, some thirty miles east of Bulupitiya. Even in 1951 there was no secrecy in the government's intent to protect the forests of this region. Still earlier the positive programmes of Rural Development had made significant strides in settling the remaining migratory bands, and in popularizing settled agriculture. Yet, without controlled water or technological revolution the center of life falls by default of fire agriculture.

For the sake of economic development in Ceylon, the jungle oriented community must go. With its demise, however, there goes a way of living based upon an economic system which while uneconomic and impoverishing to people and land, is valued by them as every society values its very life. Adaptations to the jungle milieu have yeilded rich and satisfying group structures. Already in 1951 Bulupitiyans knew that their way was in imminent danger. They could see neither sense nor justice in programmes which would destroy them in order to save them. Few carefully husbanding peasants could be more emotionally rooted to their land, nor, in a social organization system more closely integrated with its use.

AGRICULTURAL CALENDAR
1949-1950

Period	Major <i>Chena</i> Operations	Major Other Operations
May	Gingerly harvested and <i>chena</i> abandoned.	<i>Aralu</i> gathered. Late paddy harvested.
June	Inter- <i>chena</i> period	<i>Aralu</i> gathered
Early July	Inter- <i>chena</i> period Discussion of plans.	Paddy field preparation at Nilgala.
Late July Early August	<i>Chena</i> land chosen Felling and clearing	Sowing Nilgala Paddy; watching
Late August Early September	Burning and Fencing Families to <i>chena</i> .	Nilgala paddy harvested, threshing.
Late September Early October.	Sowing maize, manioc, kurakkan, pulses.	Honey gathering.
Late October Early November	Growing season, watching.	Paddy fields prepared for N.E. monsoon season.
Late November Early December.	Harvest maize.	Paddy sown.

Mid-December to January 5.	Sowing hill paddy	Paddy growing season Watching.
January 5 to February 4	Harvesting kurakkan and other crops	Paddy watching.
February to end	Harvesting limas, greengram.	Paddy watching.
March	Harvesting hill paddy, manoic.	Short period paddy harvested.
April	Harvesting chillies	Threshing, etc. Honey season ends.

DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE IN A POLYANDROUS VILLAGE

D. N. MAJUMDAR

Nearly thirteen miles away from Chakrata, a Cantonment town, which is also the *tehsil* headquarters of Jaunsar Bawar, Dehradun district, (U.P.) lies the village Lohari spread over an uneven stony ridge, five hundred feet below the lower Simla Road. At different points, three paths issue from the Simla road, and wind into the village. One path starts about two miles beyond Jaddi, a second from the top of the latter village, and a third shoots from the Chakrata-Deoban road which joins the lower Simla road. All the paths leading to the village go zig-zag and are stony, uneven and slippery. The first of the three paths mentioned above, is nearly two and a half miles long and is normally used by those who go to Jaddi and Chakrata. The second is just a *nala* (water-track) sparsed with big boulders, which have been exposed by the water rushing down the hills in the rainy season. The third path comes down from the junction of the lower Simla road and the Deoban road. It passes by a rock, standing by the road, forming a sort of a natural gate as it were. Down upto Lokhandi peak, the path is lost in open steep ground strewn with small boulder stones. From Lokhandi onward, upto a few yards it is more or less even, but the rest is stony, till it reaches *dobani* or the village well. In front of the well stand two big boulders, about 5 to 7 feet high, through which passes a narrow lane, not big enough to allow a corpulent person to pass through. As soon as one crosses this natural gate, the whole village suddenly emerges in view.

Standing at this natural gate, one can see the several terraces on which the village is situated. The stones that lie scattered form some kind of staircase. Coming down the top terrace, one enters the houses of the Nath and Rajputs. On a second terrace stands the house of another Rajput, Ran Singh Shitlanrhun. A little below there is a third terrace pretty spacious, on which the village school is situated, and in front of it lies the *anganrh*, or open space which is the public square of the village. Attached to it, is the temple housing the god Mahasu.

All the houses to the left of the precipitous ridge belong to the Rajputs. On the right hand side from below the temple, down to the south-east end of the village the houses belong to the Koltas. The difference between the Rajput and Kolta settlements is seen in the structure and construction of the houses. Those of the Rajput, are big and spacious with a 'tenrhan' attached to it. But Kolta houses are small, not at all spacious, and appear rugged. At one

place, small hutments of the Koltas, built on small terraces reclaimed from the precipice, form the periphery of the village. This is a dirty area and a breeding place for flies and mosquitoes as cow-dung is freely dumped there, and in the early hours of the morning, people squat there to obey the calls of nature. The precipice on the left is stony and often in the rainy season, when there is heavy downpour, the flowing water rolls down big stones which bang and shake the foundations of the houses. Many houses collapse or are demolished to escape accidents.

Lohari lies in the Dhaneu *Khat** and is under the jurisdiction of the *Sadar Sayana* of Jaddi. Dhaneu, Masheu and Bharam *khats* are together known as Kandmanrh. They are so called because of their situation on the *kanda* or hill-top. Owing to their location these villages have remained inaccessible, and contacts being few the people of these villages are referred to as *jangli* (rude). Lohari does not seem to be an ancient settlement. It is said by some recent writers on Jaunsar Bawar that waves of Mohamedan invasions in India, especially in the alluvial Indo-Gangetic plain, stimulated dispersal of Rajput migrants who moved to these interior parts, and established new settlements, under feudal leaders. The Rajputs and Brahmins of Jaunsar Bawar are related to those of Kashmir, Kullu and Kumaon and their cultural life shows abundant similarities. The affiliation they have with the Pandavas and to their god Mahasu whom they have brought from Kashmir indicate immigration from Kashmir and neighbouring areas and not from Rajputana. The local people speak of two waves of migration to this place. The first, they say, took place several generations ago. Madan Singh Khakhata told us that his family and that of Run Singh Khakhata were the only descendants of the Rajputs who had come from Jubbal and founded a settlement here. Even today these families live at a distance of about 800 feet from the main settlement of the village.

Amidst spacious fields of the village, there are two or three clusters of houses in the vicinity of Lokhandi peak which are known by the name of Khakhatanrh, although in Government records they do not form a separate village. The first cluster, on a raised ground, which one comes across while going from the side of the main settlement of Lohari, consists of six or seven rugged structures, three of which belong to the Bajgi caste, and the rest to two Rajput families of Khakhatanrh who keep their goats and cattle in them. A small temple of Mahasu has been made near the settlement, and adjacent to it, there is another temple which is occupied by a second god, known as Shiliguri. At a distance of about a hundred feet, back of this cluster, are seen three houses, roofed with slabs of black stone

* A *khat* is hilly sector containing several villages.

two of which belong to Run Singh and one to Madan Singh. On the precipice of Lokhandi *tibba* (peak) there are four houses, all belonging to the Koltas serving these Rajput families. Till recent years, these Rajput families used to marry in Sirmour. Madan Singh married one of his sisters there but she was divorced. Now, he does not like to marry his relations outside Jaunsar Bawar. Of course he has his reasons. He thinks the difference in cultural life between the two areas makes adjustment difficult.

The settlement founded by the migrant Rajputs from Jubbal flourished, it appears, and multiplied in course of time. At that time, the ridge on which Lohari is situated, was barren. On the precipice of the Lokhandi peak, to the south-west of the ridge was situated Khakhatanrh while on the other side of the ridge, to the south-east, on the precipice of Minar hill, there stood a second settlement called Mayapawata. Mayapawata was destroyed when heaps of boulders and earth tumbled down the hill. No one knows if any of the inhabitants survived. At that time there were only 18 Rjput families in the valley of Badeur. It was then that a Rajput (Chauhan) migrant from Sirmour, chanced to pass that way. He requested for shelter and food and in return promised to look after their sheep, goats, and cattle. He was allotted some space near the village well where he is said to have constructed a house. Later on he married a 'dhyanti' (a girl) from Khakhatanrh, made a request for land which was granted to him and thus founded a family. The family multiplied and divided itself into twenty-eight families. According to Mandor Singh of Khakhatanrh, these two groups of Rajputs were not on good terms. "The inhabitants of Lohari", he said "with the help of the Brahmin performed some *jantra-mantra*, (black-magic) which resulted in the death of our kith and kin. Ultimately only one of our ancestors survived; he fled to Hanol to take refuge under Mahasu. The latter took pity on him, came with him to this village, and was installed in the temple. Mahasu saved our ancestor and since then his family continued to prosper. Later on, the people of Lohari accepted this ancestor of ours, as 'dai bhai' i.e., as kith and kin, and henceforth we stopped inter-marrying. Now we are of them and with them.".

Lohari is described as a Rajput village, because the population is predominantly that of the Rajputs. The Rajput families in Lohari number 29, Koltas 22, Bajgis 4, and Nath 2 only, the grand total of families being 57¹. The total population of the village excluding the satellite settlements comes to 351 persons, 205 males and 146 females. The ratio of males to females comes to 71.22 females per 100 males. The average size of the family comes to 6.6 persons. The largest

¹ Based on figures collected in 1954.

family of the village consists of 14 members, while the smallest of 2 only.

INCIDENCE OF POLYANDRY

The people of Lohari like those of other villages in Jaunsar Bawar are polyandrous. This is, however, a general categorisation, which does not tell the whole tale. Many deviant forms are found. Polyandrous family consists of a number of males (real or step brothers in Jaunsar Bawar) sharing a common wife or wives without any exclusive right of any one brother to any one wife. Though we come across such conventional types of families, in others we find equal number of males sharing an equal number of wives, either with exclusive rights to no one wife, or to one, in the latter case the family behaving as a joint but monogamous family. Some families combine polyandry with monogamy, others with polygyny, and in joint families several forms are found to coexist side by side. The father may be polyandrous, sharing with his brothers a common wife, the eldest son living with one wife to whom other brothers have no access, a second son may be having one wife which he shares with his other brothers. There are also a few natural or nuclear families. There are several causes giving rise to such deviant forms. One is *circumstantial*. If one of the two brothers in a family, living with two wives, dies, the family becomes polygynous. If one of the wives demands a divorce and obtains the same, the family remains polyandrous. Their children may form any type of family. When partition takes place, new families come into existence which may take any form. Bhiparu Kolta's family is a good example. Bhiparu's grandfather migrated to Lohari from Sirmour. Bhiparu had two more brothers who died leaving behind two wives. One of these was young and from the same village and without any issue. The elder of the wives gave birth to eight sons and two daughters, out of which four sons died. She could not pull on with her younger sister-in-law and Bhiparu was partial to the latter. She, therefore, separated with her sons, the daughters were already married and were living with their husbands. Bhiparu has since been living with his younger wife. They have a son born after the family had separated. The four sons of Bhiparu, later on found it impossible to pull on together as one of the two common wives refused to live under polyandrous condition. She was attached to the eldest brother and wanted to live with him alone. The three other brothers revolted and obtained partition. The dissenting brothers have founded a polyandrous family by adding one more wife *i.e.*, now they have two wives between three brothers. Thus, one family has divided into three, one of which is of the natural type, another polyandrous and the third a joint polygamous family. Again,

Jas Ram Sayana's family has become a natural one. He along with his brothers married a woman who died of a disease. He then brought another wife, but for a long time, the latter did not prove her fertility. He, therefore, married a third wife. In the meantime, his brothers died leaving him alone. One of the wives freed herself by obtaining divorce and thus his family today consists of himself, his wife and his children.

A second cause of deviant family types can be called *functional*, in the sense that they arise due to certain needs and requirements of the family. Gumanu Nath's family has now become joint as well as polygynous, because he has brought a second wife, the first proving barren. It is joint because his parents are also living with him. Deo Ram's polyandrous family became polygamous. He has a brother about forty years of age. Both of them have one wife between them and she produced six children. There was now the need of another person in the house, and he brought a second wife for his son. Likewise, Sher Singh being the only working person in his family and unable to look after his fields and cattle felt the need of a second wife. His first wife was invalid, and therefore could not help him even in domestic work.

Many familial forms emerge in the process of functioning of the family, and what is more, these forms are not stable. It is possible, however, to classify the various types of families into (1) family in process and (2) family at a particular point of time. The family in process has already been detailed. At a particular point of time, the families can be grouped into the following categories (1) Polyandrous, (2) Polygynous, (3) Polygamous and (4) Natural or nuclear. If the head of the family is also the head of a polyandrous family, two sub-types result (1) with equal number of husbands and wives and (2) with unequal number of husbands and wives. The tables appended along, indicate various types of families in the village. Incidence of polyandry in Lohari is 49.12, of natural families, 38.40, polygamous, 12.2 p.c. There are 28 polyandrous families (6 with equal number of husbands and wives and 22 with unequal number) 7 polygamous and 22 natural, the total number of families in the village being 57. Of these the Rajput families which are 29 in number, have 130 males and 109 females, the ratio of males to females, being 100 : 83.85. The average size of the family among the Rajputs is 8.24, the largest family consisting of 14 persons and the smallest of 3 persons. The Kolta form the second largest group of the village population. There are 22 Kolta families, with 68 males and 51 females the ratio of males to females among the Koltas being 100 : 74.63. The average size of the Kolta family is slightly less than that obtained amongst the Rajputs, it is 5.3, the largest family among the Koltas consists of 9 persons, the smallest of 2 only.

Four Bajgi families consist of only eight members and each family as if by mere chance, comprises of only two members. Two Nath families are from the same ancestral line. Three generations ago, partition took place and as a result, today there are two Nath families in the village, whose membership comes to only ten, each consisting of five persons. Bhagat Ram (Nath) gave his daughter in marriage to his wife's brother. Madho Nath's sister is married to Bhagat Ram whose daughter is married to Gumanu (Nath) son of Kamalu (Nath) who is the brother of Madho Nath. The Naths are a scattered caste distributed throughout the region, and owing to its priestly role, the members of the caste do not live in numbers in any village, as do the Rajputs or even the Koltas. Like the Koltas, the Naths are also dependent upon the Rajput who are their *Jajmans*, but they do not live segregated as do the Koltas. They are rigidly endogamous as is evident from the case cited above. There are other cases to prove the inbreeding of the Naths. Madho Nath's eldest daughter aged hardly 14, is married at Jagtanra, 5 miles away from Lohari, to a man of 40, who has already married one of Madho's sisters. It is also a fact that the women of the caste have a low fertility, and often a second marriage is resorted to, for securing issues. Madho's brother Gumanu has brought a second wife from Mashak as his first wife had proved barren.

Table I details the age distribution among the people of Lohari. Of 134 Rajputs we inquired of, 23, i.e., 17.1 p.c. are of 10 years and below, 7 or 5.2 p.c. of 60 and above. The maximum number i.e., 28, is found in the age group 21-30, 22 in the group 11-20, the same number in the group 31-40. There are 15 persons, in the age group 41-50, 17, in the group 51-60. The Koltas have 18 persons in the age group 10 and below, 13 in the group 11-20, 9 in the group 21-30, 14 in the group 31-40, 8 in the group 41-50, 4 in 51-60, and only 2 in the group 60 and above, out of a total of 68 people investigated by us.

The incidence of child marriage is very high both among the Rajputs and the Koltas, the two numerically larger groups in Lohari. Out of 152 cases among the Rajputs 19 males and 24 females i.e. 43, were married at the age of 5 and below, 14 males and 12 females, total 26, were married between the ages 6 to 10 years. Among the Koltas, out of 54 persons, 6 males and 8 females were married for the first time at the age of 5 and below, 11 males and 9 females, at the age of 6 to 10 years, 8 males and 8 females, at the age of 11 to 15 years and 2 males and 2 females were married for the first time, at the age of 16 and above.

Most of the marriages in Jaunsar Bawar take place, within the *Khat*, or between neighbouring villages. Out of 148 males and 85 females among the Rajputs of Lohari, it was found that 148 persons

were married within a range of 6 miles, 82 of which were within a range of 3 miles or below. Only in 19 marriages, the distance the parties had to travel exceeded 12 miles. Similarly among the Koltas, 40 persons married within the range of 3 miles and below, 32 within 4 to 6 miles, 17, 7 to 9 miles, only 1 marriage took place, between villages 12 miles or more distant from each other, out of a total of 93 cases we had enquired of.

Table VI shows the percentage of divorce among the people of Lohari; the three castes from whom figures are available, tell different tales. Of these the Bajji families are few, so we need not discuss them. Of 32 joint polyandrous families among the Rajputs, who represent the father's generation, in 10 families there was no divorce, in 11 one divorce, in 6 two, in 4 families three divorces, and in 1 family there were more than four cases of divorce; 31 percent of the families did not have a single case of divorce, and 34.3 had one divorce per family. In the ego's generation, of the 15 families, either living jointly or separate from their parents, eight of them did not have a single case of divorce and two families had two cases each, in other words, in 53.3 per cent of the families there were no divorce, and in 33.3 percent families there was only one case of divorce per family. Although the size of the samples is small, this is at least indicative of the change in attitude to family life from the parents' to the sons' generation. Among the Koltas, in the parent's generation 35 percent of the families had no divorce; 35 percent had a single divorce per family, and 25 percent with two divorces, each, while in the ego's generation, 66.6 percent of the families had no divorce, 22.2 percent had one divorce, and 11.1 percent had two divorces per family. In most of the parents' generation the families are completed, but the ego's generation has yet to complete them. But considering the fact that divorce generally takes place in the earlier stages of the cohabitation period, the trend that we have noticed appears to be real and is likely to continue till family relationship becomes more stable. The differential rates of divorce between the Rajput and the Koltas need not have any practical significance, it is more or less circumstantial. It is also true that divorce dissolves more marriages than does death. In all the families we have investigated, we found the incidence of divorce of women to be 35.53, while death accounted for 12.87 of the married women. There is another important demographic fact in Lohari, and this is more or less true of most parts of Jaunsar-Bawar. 67.3 percent of the total female population among the Rajput are below 40 years of age and 30.5 percent are between the ages 41-60. Among the Koltas 70 percent of the women are below 40 years of age and 25.5 percent between 41-60. Out of 92 Rajput women, 24 were found to be in the age group 1-10, and out of 50 Kolta women 6 were found

in the group 1-10. The Kolta, therefore, have less percentage of women in the children group 1-10 years than it is the case with the Rajput, and this must have some demographic influence on the future population of Kolta in Jaunsar-Bawar.

The pattern of family life in Lohari is joint coupled with polyandry. The joint family, as a matter of fact, seems to be an imperative need of the socio-economic set-up. Higher incidence of the joint family amongst the Rajput who are real masters and setters of pattern in living standards, confirms our view. Agriculture on high altitudes coupled with pastoralism, lays stress on collective labour which can be secured under joint living. The Kolta who do not own land, and live as agrestic serfs, have a lower incidence of polyandry, *viz.*, 36.36 percent as contrasted with 68.96 percent among the Rajput. The incidence of joint family among the Kolta is 45.45 per cent while it is 62 per cent among the Rajput. The Kolta do not have much stake in the economic life; they are a commodity, as it were 'bought and sold'. They do not own land and even the land on which they build their homestead does not belong to them. For them what is important is their labour which they may sell anywhere and to anybody.

A grown-up son of a Kolta, if he lives along with his father may not be of any use, as he will have to serve the same Rajput family. He can increase his family income if he serves in another house. This fact is responsible for the lower incidence of joint family among the Kolta. The Kolta are less permanent than the landed caste of the village. While not a single Rajput family is known to have migrated to Lohari from any other village, near or distant, five of the twenty-two Kolta families living in Lohari have immigrated to Lohari in recent years. Madan Singh Khakhata brought Mandia Kolta to work for him, from Baghainrhin or to be exact, Mandia himself came over to Madan Singh, as he found life under his previous master intolerable. Jimutra decided to leave his native village and came over to live with Bir Singh, for the same reason. Sambhu Kolta said that his grandfather came to Lohari from Sirmour, as he could not eke out an existence there, this man's family has split into three lines, each living independently and attached to different Rajput families.

The Rajputs of Lohari are divided into fourteen sections, the names of which are those of the founders of families. The following sections are found. The number of families in each section is put in bracket. Kolta (2), Jagtanrh (3), Shitlanrh (1), Ramyanrh (3), Bijanrh (2), Khelanrh (3), Jogyanrh (1), Shikhranrh (3), Waranrhan (2), Rowanrhan (1), Raihik (4), Wiraik (2), Morhanahan (1), Sojanrhan (1), total 29 families. Shitlanrh section takes its name from Shital Singh, who founded the family by separating from his parents. Today, these names look like surnames, and have been abbreviated

as for example, Khakhata is used for Khakhatarh. Khakhatarh derives its name either from the fact that it is inhabited by the Khakhatas, or because the latter live in Khakhtarh. The kin ties are pretty strong between the members of a line or section, and express eloquently on occasions of births and deaths, when mutual obligations are highlighted. When Bichu's son expired, Dallu arranged for the disposal of the body, Dallu belongs to the same line as Bichu. Splitting of families today is not followed by adoption of new family names. When Kedar Singh and Dhyanu Singh separated two generations back, both of them remained Wiraik. Families who own the same sectional name, do not intermarry, neither is it frequent to marry within the village, although a village is inhabited by multiple sections. This, we were told by some elderly villagers, is not desirable as the *dhyantis* (girls) do not want to be *rantis* (wives) in the same village. Considering the fact of double standard of morality in Jaunsar Bawar, the explanation seems to be functional.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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TABLE I
SHOWING AGE AND SEX GROUPS (INCLUDING STATIONARY SETTLEMENTS)

Age	Rajput			Bajgi			Kolta			
	Male		Female	Male		Female	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	
10 yrs. and below	23	17.1	24	26.1	1	33.3	—	—	18	26.5
11—20	22	16.4	6	6.5	—	—	1	33.3	13	19.1
21—30	28	20.9	20	21.7	1	33.3	—	—	9	13.3
31—40	22	16.4	12	13.0	—	—	—	—	14	20.6
41—50	15	11.2	18	19.6	—	—	—	—	8	11.8
51—60	17	12.7	10	10.9	—	—	2	66.6	4	5.9
60 and above	7	5.2	2	2.2	1	33.3	—	—	2	3.0
Total	134	99.9	92	100.0	3	99.9	3	99.9	68	100.2

TABLE II
SHOWING SIZE OF FAMILY

Sl. No.	Size of family (Persons)	Rajput			Bajgi			Kolta		
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency
1.	1—5	8	25.8	4	100.0	—	—	10	50.00	—
2.	6—10	17	54.8	—	—	—	9	45.00	—	—
3.	11—15	6	19.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
4.	16—Above	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	5.00	—
5.	Total	31	99.9	4	100	—	—	20	100	—

TABLE III
DURATION OF STAY (GENERATION-WISE) OF THE FAMILIES

Sl. No.	Composition of the family (Generations)	Rajput		Bajgi		Kolta	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1.	One	2	6.4	4	100	1	5
2.	Two	16	51.6	—	—	14	70
3.	Three	12	38.7	—	—	5	25
4.	Four	1	3.2	—	—	—	—
5.	Five	—	—	—	—	—	—
6.	Total	31	99.9	4	100	20	100

TABLE IV
SHOWING AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE

Sl. No.	Age at first marriage in years	Rajput				Bajgi				Kolta					
		Male No.	Female No.	Total %	No.	Male %	Female No.	Total %	No.	Male %	Female No.	Total %	No.		
1.	5 and below	19	41.3	24	52.1	46.7	—	—	—	6	22.2	8	29.6	29.9	
2.	6-10	14	30.4	12	26.0	28.2	—	—	—	11	40.9	9	33.3	37.0	
3.	11-15	10	21.7	6	13.0	17.3	1	100	—	50	8	29.6	8	29.6	
4.	16-20	1	2.1	3	6.3	4.3	—	—	1	100	50	1	3.7	1	3.7
5.	20 and above	2	4.3	1	2.1	3.2	—	—	—	—	1	3.7	1	3.7	3.7
6.	Total	46	99.8	46	99.5	99.7	1	100	1	100	27	100.1	27	99.9	99.9

TABLE V.

SHOWING DISTANCE OF MARRIAGE ALLIANCES

Sl. no.	Distance in miles	Raipur						Bajgi						Kolta					
		Male		Female		Total %	Male	Female		Total %	Male	Female		Total %	Male	Female		Total %	
		No.	%	No.	%			No.	%			No.	%			No.	%		
1.	Same village	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
2.	3 and below	51	34.3	31	36.4	35.1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	58.3	43.0	
3.	4—6	45	30.4	21	24.7	28.3	7	70	1	50	66.6	38	40.5	4	16.6	4	16.6	34.4	
4.	7—9	37	25.0	22	25.8	25.3	2	20	—	—	—	—	16.6	13	18.8	4	16.6	18.2	
5.	10—12	7	4.7	—	—	3.0	—	—	—	1	50	8.3	2	2.9	1	4.1	1	4.1	3.3
6.	13—15	7	4.7	4	4.7	24.7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
7.	16 and above	1	.6	7	8.2	3.4	1	10	—	—	—	8.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
8.	Total	148	99.8	85	99.8	99.8	10	100	2	100	99.8	24	99.8	24	99.7	24	99.7	99.9	

TABLE VI

Sl. no.	No. of Divorces	Percentage of Divorces										Kolta
		Rejected				Bulgi				Own generation		
		Own generation	Son's generation	Total %	No.	Own generation	Son's generation	Total %	No.	Own generation	Son's generation	Total %
1.	No Divorce	10	31.2	8	53.3	38.3	2	50	—	50	7	35
2.	One	11	34.3	5	33.3	34.0	1	25	—	25	7	35
3.	Two	6	18.7	2	13.3	17.0	—	—	—	—	5	25
4.	Three	4	12.3	—	—	9.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
5.	Four and above	1	3.1	—	—	2.1	1	25	—	25	1	5
	Total	32	99.5	15	99.9	100.4	4	100	—	100	20	100
									9	9	99.9	99.9

POPULATION AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF AN INDIAN RURAL COMMUNITY

EDWIN EAMES

INTRODUCTION

The material presented in this paper was collected while the author was a Ford Foundation Overseas Training and Research Fellow and a Fulbright Student. Particular thanks must be expressed to Dr. D. N. Majumdar for his aid in the selection of the village for study and in the initial introduction to the villagers.

Village Gohana Kallan is eight miles north of the city of Lucknow and twenty miles from the tahsil headquarters situated in Malahibad. The nearest *thana*¹ is at Madyaon, two and a half miles away. The village is a part of the district of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. It is the largest and most important of the six villages which comprise the *Gaon Sabha*².

Transportation facilities for this village are very limited. The most common means of transportation are bullock cart, cycle, *ekka*³, and foot. The nearest cement road is two miles away by cycle or foot path. A bullock cart path leads to the same road, running between Lucknow and Sitapur, a distance of a little more than fifty miles, but the distance travelled by bullock is a little more than three miles. *Ekas* may be gotten by walking to the main road and hailing them there. Still another means of transportation is the local railway station at Bakshi-Ka-Talab, two and a half miles away, but this means of transportation is not often availed of since the schedule set is a very rigid one and there are only two trains a day.

There are three shops in the village but most of the major marketing is done at a bi-weekly bazaar held in Madyaon. Another village, Kutua, just one mile distant, has a greater collection of shops but the villagers do not like to buy any goods there since the prices are usually higher than those prevailing at the bazaar.

The basis of the village economy is agriculture. There is not a single household in the village which is not dependent, at least to some extent, upon agriculture. Some other occupations in the

¹ *thana* is a police station and is the center of a police circle including many villages.

² *Gaon Sabha* is the collectivity of all those who are able to vote for a single *panchayat* usually 1000 or more individuals. There are usually several villages in each such unit.

³ *ekka* is a horse drawn vehicle with a platform approximately four feet off the ground on which the passengers are accommodated.

village are iron working, earthen pot making, washing of clothes, shopkeeping and winnow basket making, barbering and wood working. Although agriculture is the basis of village life it is not a very secure or satisfying one because of the limited amount of land available for cultivation. There are vast tracts of waste land neighbouring the village which are completely unfit for cultivation. About fifty years ago, according to informants, this land was very rich but continued use without any attempt to replenish the minerals taken out of the soil has led to its depletion. Some short grass still grows on this land, but the village animals are grazed there and this has fore stalled any natural regeneration of the land.

The poverty existing in this village is physically demonstrated by the housing as well as the appearance of the people. There is not a single brick house in the village and they are usually smaller than those which have been observed in other villages. There is a single brick well in the village which was constructed by the ex-Zemindar¹ for his personal use primarily, but this is now used by all the villagers since the abolition of Zemindari in 1951. There is very little in the way of wearing apparel to distinguish the richest from the poorest villager or the higher caste from the lower caste people.

METHOD

The census which is the basis of this paper was conducted during January and February 1954². The first step in the census was the preparation of a map showing every house in the village. Each house was then given a number and visited with a prepared questionnaire form. In some cases a single house contained two separate households³ in which case an additional number was assigned to one of the households and it was treated as a separate unit. An attempt at uniformity and accuracy was the selection of the head of the household as the informant, since it is usually the case that he is the person with the most complete information about the household unit. Where it was impossible to interview the household head, for some reason or other, a male member of the household, usually above twenty-five years of age, was interviewed. Another check on the accuracy of the material received was the use of a local *pandit* in the collection of the data. In several cases he pointed out misrepresentations made by various people, usually about landholdings.

This work was not undertaken immediately after introduction into the village since it was felt that some information in the census

¹ Zemindar is a landlord.

² The present tense will be used in dealing with this material.

³ A household is an economic and social unit. The members share in the income and expenditures, cook their food and eat in common.

would not have been given to someone who was completely unknown to the villager. A period of two months of almost continuous residence elapsed before this work was begun.

POPULATION

There are 614 individuals living in Gohana Kallan; 329 are male and 285 are female (see Table 1). The sex ratio is 1154 males for every 1000 females but the figures are much too small to talk about a population trend.

TABLE 1.
MALE AND FEMALE POPULATION OF CASTE GROUPS LIVING IN VILLAGE
GOHANA KALLAN

Number	Caste	Number of Males	Number of Females	Total Population	Percentage of Total Population
1.	Chamar	79	78	157	26
2.	Thakur	70	56	126	21
3.	Pasi	57	45	102	17
4.	Ahir	35	33	68	11
5.	Kumhar	20	18	38	6
6.	Dhobi	21	14	35	6
7.	Nai	9	10	19	3
8.	Barhai	11	5	16	2
9.	Kalwar	5	7	12	2
10.	Brahmin	8	3	11	2
11.	Gareria	4	7	11	2
12.	Lohar	3	5	8	1
13.	Baksor	4	3	7	1
14.	Khatik	2	1	3	0
15.	Kurmi	1	0	1	0
Total		329	285	614	100

Fifteen caste groups live in the village and they comprise 117 households (see Table 2). The average number of individuals per household is 5.25, but for the three largest groups, Chamar, Thakur, and Pasi, the average is well above this figure. All of the caste groups in the village hold the large joint family to be an ideal, but there have been a large number of separations of joint families during the last few years. It should also be noted that of the six smallest

groups in the village five are well below the average in number of individuals per household. Number of individuals per household for the various caste groups is given in Table 3.

TABLE 2.

POPULATION, NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS, AND NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS PER HOUSEHOLD OF CASTE GROUPS LIVING IN VILLAGE GOHANA KALLAN.

Number	Caste	Population	Number of Households	Number of Individuals per Household
1.	Chamar	157	29	5.41
2.	Thakur	126	21	6.00
3.	Pasi	102	19	5.37
4.	Ahir	68	16	4.25
5.	Kumhar	38	5	7.60
6.	Dhobi	35	7	5.00
7.	Nai	19	3	6.33
8.	Barhai	16	3	5.33
9.	Kalwar	12	2	6.00
10.	Brahmin	11	3	3.67
11.	Gareria	11	4	2.75
12.	Lohar	8	1	8.00
13.	Baksor	7	2	3.50
14.	Khatik	3	1	3.00
15.	Kurmi	1	1	1.00
Total		614	117	5.25

AGE

The data relating to age are not accurate enough to warrant any statistics other than those presented in Table 4. One of the difficulties in the collection of age data is that the concept of age as individual and absolute has not permeated very deeply. When an individual in this village is asked his age he tries to relate it to some other villager's age or to some event. Even when no attempt is made to relate age in this way it is customary for those twenty years of age or older to give their age in round figures, *i.e.*, 20, 25, 30, etc. For those under twenty this is not a problem. Another difficulty in the collection of age data by a house to house census is that it is customary for a wife to be younger than her husband. This is an ideal pattern but there are many cases where the reverse is true, although this information would not be readily divulged. Recognizing all of these limitations it is still possible to form some idea of the age distribution in the village.

TABLE 3.

ACTUAL SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS OF CASTE GROUPS LIVING IN VILLAGE GOHANAN KALLAN

Caste	Individuals in the Household				Total Number of Households	Percent of Total Number of Households
	3 or less	4 to 6	7 to 9	10 or more		
Chamar	6	15	7	1	29	24
Thakur	6	5	8	2	21	18
Pasi	5	8	4	2	19	16
Ahir	6	7	3	0	16	14
Dhobi	2	3	2	0	7	6
Kumhar	0	3	1	1	5	4
Gareria	3	1	0	0	4	3
Nai	1	1	0	1	3	3
Barhai	1	1	1	0	3	3
Brahmin	1	2	0	0	3	3
Kalwar	0	2	0	0	2	2
Baksor	1	1	0	0	2	2
Lohar	0	0	1	0	1	1
Khatik	1	0	0	0	1	1
Kurmi	1	0	0	0	1	1
Total	34	49	27	7	117	101*
Percentage of Total	29	42	23	6	100	—

* Total adds up to more than 100 Percent because of the large number of groups having only one or two total number of households.

TABLE 4.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CASTE GROUPS LIVING IN VILLAGE GOHANA KALLAN.

Caste	Age in Years							Total
	10 or less	11—20	21—30	31—40	41—50	51—60	61 or more	
Chamar	49	31	42	12	9	13	1	157
Thakur	37	27	15	21	16	6	4	126
Pasi	32	18	23	10	10	7	2	102
Ahir	20	14	12	9	8	5	0	68
Kumhar	11	11	6	6	1	3	0	38
Dhobi	10	6	8	2	4	2	3	35
Nai	8	4	5	1	1	0	0	19
Barhai	4	6	2	2	1	1	0	16
Kalwar	5	2	2	1	2	0	0	12
Brahmin	2	4	2	1	1	1	0	11
Gareria	2	2	2	3	0	2	0	11
Lohar	2	2	2	0	1	1	0	8
Baksor	0	3	1	1	1	1	0	7
Khatik	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
Kurmi	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	182	131	123	69	57	42	10	614
Percentage of Total	30	21	20	11	9	7	2	100

EDUCATION

One of the most interesting things about this village is the very low rate of education and literacy (see Table 5), despite its proximity to Lucknow City which is one of the leading educational centers in India. Until recently there has been a complete lack of emphasis on education since opportunities for an educated person in the village did not exist and the amount of education obtainable was not enough to enable a person to go to an urban centre and compete with other educated men.

There was no school of any kind in the village until 1945. At that time the villagers asked the Zemindar to donate one of his buildings for a primary school which he consented to do. He kept the school in repair, but after Zemindari Abolition his interest in the school disappeared and the District Board which is presently responsible for the school has not been able to give it very much aid. There are two teachers at the school who are residents of neighbouring villages. The total enrollment in the primary school is 61, but daily attendance usually is thirty or less. Four of those enrolled in the school are girls and they are all in the first grade. About two-thirds of the school population are from the Scheduled Castes, Pasi, Dhobi, Chamar, Baksor, and most of the remainder are from the Thakur caste. The fees charged for school attendance are: first grade, annas 1/6; second and third grades, annas 2/6; and fourth and fifth grades, annas 3/6. All girls and children from the Scheduled Castes are exempted from the payment of fees.

TABLE 5.

COMPLETED EDUCATION* OF CASTE GROUPS LIVING IN VILLAGE GOHANA KALLAN.

Caste**	Grades Completed					Total	Percent of Total
	1 & 2	3 & 4	5 & 6	7 & 8	9 & 10		
Thakur	0	9	1	6	0	16	40
Ahir	2	0	0	2	1	5	13
Pasi	0	3	1	0	0	4	10
Brahmin	1	1	0	2	0	4	10
Nai	0	2	1	0	0	3	8
Kumhar	0	0	2	0	0	2	5
Kalwar	1	0	0	0	1	2	5
Khatik	1	1	0	0	0	2	5
Chamar	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Lohar	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Total	5	17	6	10	2	40	100
Percent of Total	12	43	15	25	5	100	

* Those presently attending primary school in the village have not been included.

**Those caste groups not enumerated have no members who have had any education.

Education of girls in the village is still not very popular because of the very low age at marriage, usually between ten and twelve years of age. It is felt that education for a girl is merely a waste of time and that they had best be doing work in the house so that they can fit into the husband's household after the marriage takes place. Another factor involved in the unpopularity of female education is that one of the Thakur boys of the village married a girl who had completed through the third grade. This girl has refused to become part of the household and will not perform her share of the household duties. The reason given for this is that she has been educated and now feels that she is too far advanced to do this kind of work. It is simple to deduce from this the difficulties that a movement for female education would encounter in this village.

There are forty individuals in the village who have had some education, but not more than half that number are able to do more than sign their names. Of these forty, eight are presently attending a Secondary High School at Bakshi-Ka-Talab. Five of these eight are Thakurs, two are Ahirs, and one is a Kumhar. The three highest caste groups in the village according to the caste heirarchy that prevails, Brahmin, Thakur, and Ahir, account for 63% of all those with some education, while they are only 34% of the total population. The Scheduled Castes having 50% of the total population account for only 12% of those with some education.

ECONOMIC DATA

Since the basis of the village economy is agriculture it is very important to study the figures in Table 6 carefully. It will be noticed that the Thakurs, who are the second largest population group, 21% of total population, own more land than any other group in the village. The largest population group, the Chamars, 26% of total population, are the third largest landholding group in the village having only 12% of the total land held in the village. With more than one-fourth of the village population they own only one-eighth of the land. There are four Chamar families in the village who do not have any land at all, while there is only one such Thakur family and that family is supported by one of the members working in Lucknow.

The amount of land owned by an individual in an Indian village is of primary importance and it was felt that verbal data collected concerning this aspect of economic life would not be very accurate because of the great amount of fear and suspicion in the village towards any one collecting such information. An attempt was made to find out whether the landholding data collected in Village Gohana Kallan was

accurate by checking it with the *lekhpal's*¹ records of landholdings. The results of these two methods appear in Table 6. Before looking at the table in detail some explanations are necessary. The *lekhpal's* records were obtained in December 1954, but during the intervening period of approximately one year between the collection of the census material and the obtaining of the official records there had not been any sale or purchase of land in the village. The usual conversion factor of *kaccha* to *pucca bighas* is two-and-a-half *kaccha bighas* equal to one *pucca bigha*. If this conversion is performed it will be noticed that the land holdings records by the *lekhpal* are usually lower than those enumerated. This is probably due to the fact that some of the villagers own land which does not lie within the boundaries of Gohana Kallan. There is a great deal of disparity in the results obtained by the two methods, but it is difficult to decide which is the better of the two, since on one hand we have the misleading information given by the villagers and on the other the fact that the *lekhpal's* records only include land in the village.

There are two castes in the village, Khatik and Baksor, whose members do not own any land in the village, but the one family of the former group has five *bighas* of land under the *batai*² system of cultivation. The latter earn their livelihood by making winnowing baskets and selling them to the villagers. In addition, the one female Baksorin in the village attends women at the time of birth.

TABLE 6.
LANDHOLDINGS OF CASTE GROUPS IN VILLAGE GOHANA KALLAN.

Caste	Number of <i>Kaccha</i> Bighas*	Percent of Total <i>Kaccha</i> Bighas	Number of <i>Pukka</i> Bighas**	Percent of Total <i>Pukka</i> Bighas
Thakur	425	36	169.73	41
Pasi	220	19	62.32	15
Chamar	138	12	51.53	12
Ahir	136	12	38.95	9
Kumhar	74	6	35.12	9
Gareria	60	5	14.45	4
Barhai	50	4	9.23	2
Dhobi	37.5	3	13.35	3
Nai	15	1	1.29	0
Kalwar	10	1	4.00	1
Brahmin	3	0	8.57	2
Kurmi	2.5	0	1.40	0
Lohar	1.5	0	2.46	1
Total	1172.5	99	412.40	99

* Data collected by verbal census.

**Data collected from *lekhpal's* official records.

¹ Lekhpal is the village accountant formerly known as the *patwari*.

² A crop sharing system in which the cultivator provides all the implements and labour for one-half the produce.

Seven men from the village work in Lucknow, but they travel there every day and still maintain their residence in the village. Three of them are Thakurs, two are Ahirs, one is a Nai and one a Pasi. Of the seven, four deliver milk to shops in Lucknow, two work in a Lucknow college as gardeners, and one works as a *chaprasi* or messenger, in the High Court. The total amount of income brought into the village from urban employment does not exceed Rs. 400 a month.

A recent innovation in the village has been the introduction of chaff cutting machines and they have become an important index of the household's place in the economic structure. At the present time there are eleven of them in the village, four owned by Chamars, three by Thakurs, two by Pasis, one by a Barhai and one by an Ahir. The initial impetus came from the ex-Zemindar who brought such a machine to the village about fifteen years ago. He sold the machine a few years ago when he lost his land, but the people saw how valuable this machine was from the labor and time saving point of view and they have now completely accepted this innovation. Those people who own machines usually allow others to use their machines without charge, but there are some obligations attached to the use of the machine, therefore most of the people in the village who own cattle would like to have their own machines. Almost all of the machines presently in the village were purchased during the last five years.

RANKING OF CASTES IN TELANGANA VILLAGES¹

S. C. DUBE

In this paper I shall first present the traditional ranking of castes in rural Telangana, and shall follow it by an examination of some of the principles that govern this ranking. As there are a large number of castes in this region (which comprises of all the Telugu speaking districts of the State of Hyderabad), I shall consider only three villages in the present study. The social system of one of these villages has been described elsewhere and will generally give some idea of the social, economic, and ritual structure of the village communities in this area².

The castes in this region can be classed into six major groups :

- I. Priestly castes, including non-priestly Brahmans and Vaishnavas.
- II. Traders.
- III. Agricultural castes.
- IV. Artisan and occupational castes.
- V. Semi-tribal and nomadic castes.
- VI. Untouchables.

The above classification generally represents the hierarchical gradation of castes in Telangana.

The priestly castes can be divided into three groups on the basis of their faith. The Vaidiki Brahmans are *Smarta* and worship both Shiva, and Vishnu and his incarnations. The Vaishnava group consists of the Nambu and the Shri Vaishnava, who worship only Vishnu and his incarnations. The Aradhya, Jangam, Tammadi, and Madapati are Shaivite priests who worship only Shiva and his manifestations. Closely allied to this group are the Niyogi and the Vaishnava Karnam. The former are Brahmans but do not perform priestly functions. The Vaishnava Karnam also do not perform these functions. Both these castes either own land or they hold minor government offices in the villages. Like the Vaidiki Brahmans the Niyogis are *Smarta*, and as the name itself suggests the Vaishnava Karnam are Vaishnava. The Brahmans, both Vaidiki and Niyogi, are each divided into two endogamous branches—Yajurshakha and Prathamshakha, the former being regarded as the higher of the two. According to the general consensus of opinion the priestly castes (including the non-priestly Brahmans and the Vaishnava Karnam) can be ranked as :

¹ Material incorporated in this paper was collected in the course of field-work on the general theme of Caste and Social Structure in the Village Communities of Hyderabad. Author's thanks are due to Messrs. R. Prakash Rao and K. Ranga Rao for field assistance, and to Osmania University for financial support.

² Dube, S. C. *Indian Village*, London, 1955.

PRIESTLY CASTES

Smarta	Vaishnava	Shaivite
Vaidiki Brahman— Yajurshakha		Aradhyā
Vaidiki Brahman— Prathamshakha	Nambu Shri Vaishnava	Jangam Tammadi Madapati

NON-PRIESTLY BRAHMANS AND VAISHNAVAS

Smarta	Vaishnava
Niyogi—Yajurshakha	
Niyogi—Prathamshakha	Vaishnava—Karnam

Traditionally, the Vaidiki Brahmans have the right to function as priests for most of the Hindu castes in this region. For some sects and castes observing special ritual and religious practices the Nambu, Shri Vaishnavas, Aradhyā, Jangam, and Madapati can also function as priests, and I shall refer to these later. The Vaidiki Brahmans are vegetarians and refrain from liquor. They wear the sacred thread and strictly observe the prescribed rules of purity (*madi*). The Nambus perform priestly functions among the Vaishnava groups, where the Vaidiki Brahmans are not invited. They are also vegetarians and abstain from alcoholic drinks. They too wear the sacred thread and observe *madi*. However, the Nambus are mostly priests in

Vaishnava temples. The Shri Vaishnavas can function as priests among all the Vaishnava groups except the Nambus. They put on the sacred thread and observe *madi*, but in Teleangana they are not vegetarians and do not abstain from liquor. The Aradhya function as priests in their own group as well as among the Shaivite Komtis (traders). They are vegetarians, and in addition to the sacred thread wear also the *lingam*—a small phallic symbol of Shiva. They abstain from alcoholic drinks and observe *madi*. They differ from the Vaidiki and Niyogi Brahmans, and from the Nambu and the Shri Vaishnava in one important ritual aspect : while the dead among the rest are cremated, among the Aradhya they are buried. The Jangam function as priests in their own groups as well as among the lower castes following the Shavite faith. In most of these castes they work in this capacity only when a Brahman is not available for the job or when they are specifically asked by a Brahman to officiate for him. In all such cases they have to share their fees with the Brahman who has traditional right to officiate as a priest with the family in question. They are vegetarians and are not allowed alcoholic drinks. They do not put on the sacred thread ; instead they wear the *lingam*. Observance of the rules of purity is not as strict among them as it is among the other groups referred to above. However, they observe *madi* in a modified form. In respect of ritual observances and priestly functions the Madapati are similar to the Jangam, but unlike the latter they cannot become *guru* (mentor) of the followers of the Shaiva faith. The Tammadi function only as temple priests in the shrines of Shiva. Traditionally they are supposed to refrain from meat and liquor, but are as a group not very strict about it in Telangana. They too observe a modified form of *madi*. They are entitled to wear the sacred thread.

Inter-dining between the Vaidikis and the Niyogis is permitted, but they are endogamous. Younger people from the Vaidiki and the Niyogi castes can eat with the Nambu and the Aradhya, but they will stop doing so as soon as they become adults and have children. Similarly, young people from the Nambu and the Aradhya castes can inter-dine with Vaidiki and Niyogi Brahmans until children are born to them. No inter-dining is permitted between Vaidiki and Niyogi Brahmans on the one hand the Shri Vaishnava, Jangam, Tammadi, and Madapati on the other. The Shri Vaishnava cannot dine with Vaidiki and Niyogi Brahmans, nor with the Aradhya, Jangam, Tammadi, and Madapati. The Shri Vaishnava can, however, eat food cooked by the Nambus, but the latter do not reciprocate. The Jangam do not eat with the Vaidiki and Niyogi Brahmans, Nambu and Shri Vaishnava, and Aradhya and Tammadi. The Jangam and Madapati inter-dine but do not inter-marry. The Tammadi can eat from Vaidiki and Niyogi Brahmans and from the Aradhya, but

cannot offer them any food. They cannot eat any food cooked or touched by the Vaishnavas. The Vaidiki and Niyogi Brahmans, Nambu, Shri Vaishnava, and Aradhya all perform the prescribed daily Brahmanical ritual—the first four offer worship three times a day, and the Aradhya worship Shiva six times a day. They are all regarded as *twice born* and are entitled to the *upnayana* ceremony which symbolises their spiritual re-birth. The Jangam and Madapati are also supposed to worship Shiva six times a day, but in actual practice they do so only twice a day. The Tammadi have no prescribed hours of worship.

Among the other *twice born* Varnas, there are no Kshatriyas in Telengana, although some effort has been made in recent years to prove that the Reddis and the Velmas are in fact Kshatriyas. The Komtis belong to the Vaishya Varna and are a *twice born* caste. They are vegetarians and are not allowed liquor. They wear the sacred thread; in addition the Shaivite Komtis wear the *lingam* also. They observe *madi* on the no-moon day and also on the days of important fasts and festivals.

The traditional hierarchy of agricultural and artisan castes can be presented thus :

<i>Reddi</i> (Agriculturists)	<i>Velma</i> (Agriculturists)	<i>Kummarri</i> (Potters)	<i>Golla</i> (Shepherd)
<i>Telaga</i> (Agriculturists)			<i>Deva-Gandla</i> (Oil Pressers)
<i>Sale</i> (Weavers)			
<i>Peraka</i> (Jute Workers)			
<i>Varala</i> (Dyers)			
<i>Tenugu</i>		<i>Besta</i>	
(Fishermen)			
<i>Gandla</i> (Toddy-tappers)			
<i>Sakali</i>		<i>Mangali</i>	
(Washermen)			

The Pancha Brahma, a composite and endogamous caste of five artisan groups, has not been included in the above table because of its exclusive character, and practically independent organization. They are generally regarded as equal to the Tenaga and Deva-Gandla, although ritually they are supposed to be 'impure', and while their touch does not pollute, their food is not acceptable even to some very low caste Hindus.

All the castes in the above table are endogamous, and each has a traditional occupation. In general inter-dining is permitted among castes of the same level; people from the low levels can eat food cooked by persons from higher levels, but people from higher levels can not accept food cooked by castes of lower levels. The only exception to this rule is provided by the Sakali and the Mangali, who have similar status but who do not inter-dine. It has been pointed out that the Panch Brahma caste consists of five artisan groups and inter-marriage and inter-dining are permitted between these groups. The Panch Brahma are an exclusive caste and refrain from food cooked by all other castes. From among the other Hindu castes only the Sakali and the Madiga have started accepting food from them in recent years. Other Hindu castes refuse it. The Sale and the Panch Brahma wear the sacred thread. The former either invite a Brahmin to officiate at their socio-religious rites and ceremonies or get a priest from their own caste. The Brahman never officiates at any of the ceremonies of the Panch Brahma. Except a few Ausulas (goldsmiths) in the Panch Brahma caste, none of these groups observe *madi*. With the exception of these two, all others invite either the Brahman, or the priest of their sect, or both to conduct their major rituals and ceremonies. This gives to them a status ritually superior to that of the semi-tribal and nomadic castes, and the untouchables.

The semi-tribal and nomadic groups are on an intermediate level. They are lower than the agricultural-artisan castes, but are higher than the untouchables. They are ranked as :

Vaddar
(Stone-Workers)

Erkala
(Hunters and mat makers)

Balsantanam
(Wandering beggars)

The Vaddar accept food from all the castes on the higher levels except the Sakali and the Mangali. The Erkalas accept food from all castes higher than themselves including the Vaddar. The

Balsantanam do not refuse food from higher castes, and all three (Vaddar, Erkala, and Balsantanam) will not accept it from a caste lower than themselves. All these castes are permitted to eat meat and drink liquor. They do not wear the sacred thread and do not observe *madi*. The Brahmans do not function as priests for these castes, and this explains why they rank lower than the agricultural-artisan castes.

Finally, the two large untouchable castes of this region are the Mala and the Madiga. The status of the former is higher. The latter take care of dead cattle and do not mind carrion. It goes without saying that both are not vegetarians. They drink liquor, do not wear the sacred thread, and do not also observe *madi*.

With this we can proceed to analyse some of the main principles and considerations that govern the ranking of castes.

Caste as a form of social organization involves social segmentation. Each segment is relatively stable, and is kept apart from other segments by the all-pervading ideas of pollution that govern the inter-action of these segments. The order of ranking is largely determined by tradition, for caste is built on an ascribed system of status evolution. Ideas of ritual purity and pollution are fundamental to an understanding of status evolution and ranking in the segmentary social system built on caste. In general, castes observing strict rules for maintenance of ritual purity have a higher status than the castes that commonly relax these rules, or do not have elaborate and strict rules. It follows from it that castes that have elaborate forms prescribed for avoidance of pollution and have prescribed behaviour forms for specified states of pollution have a higher status. Those not having such norms, or having relatively easy rules, have lower status. In both we find that the more difficult, elaborate and complex the rules and the more strict their observance, the higher is the status of the caste. Observance of prescribed daily ritual is another important criterion. Castes having definite obligation of observing prescribed daily ritual have higher status than that of castes having no such ritual obligations. Hierarchy of foods permitted and eaten by different castes, and occupations allowed to and practised by them also govern their rank in Hindu society. Vegetarian food is superior to non-vegetarian food, and so vegetarians have a higher status than that of non-vegetarian. But there is a hierarchy in non-vegetarian foods also. Mutton is regarded as superior to pork and carrion. Those who eat the domestic pig and carrion are regarded as very low. The idea of hierarchy and gradation extends to occupations also. Priestly functions are rated high, trading and agriculture follow next in importance. Certain occupations are regarded as unclean because of their associations. The barber who lives by cutting hair and the washerman who washes and

cleans dirty clothes have unclean occupations. But their occupations are higher than those of rearing pigs and disposing of dead cattle. The complex inter-play of a number of these factors determines the rank of a caste in Hindu society.

Castes having higher status such as the Vaidiki and Niyogi Brahmans, the Nambu, Shri Vaishnava, Vaishnava Karnam and the Aradhya observe elaborate rules of ritual purity or *madi*. Two different types of *madi* are recognized : the ideal type of ritual purity is called *manchi madi*, and a less complex alternative to it is known as *eda madi*. *Manchi Madi* must be observed before worship and chanting of sacred hymns, before certain important rituals such as the *upnayana* ceremony of boys and young man and the *karma* rites for the dead, on days of important fasts and feasts, and before cooking the morning meals if a portion of the food has to be offered to the household gods and deities. The less complex *eda madi* is observed before cooking the evening meals (out of which a portion is not offered to the images) and in marriage ceremonies as well as in post-marriage ceremonies of *mangala gaur*. To enter into a state of *manchi madi* one must perform one's ablutions, specially cleaning of teeth, and must take a bath. The clothes to be worn after this bath must be ritually pure. For this the clothes must either be freshly washed or they should have been washed the previous day by a ritually clean person and should not in the meantime have been touched by any one who is oneself not ritually clean. In order to prepare clothes for *manchi madi* one must wash them clean, leave them wet, take one's bath, rinse the wet clothes again, and leave them to dry in a place where there is no danger of their being touched by any one who is not ritually pure and clean. Wearing clothes like this one enters the state of *manchi madi*. Urination, defecation, sexual intercourse, chance contact with urine, faeces or semen, breast-feeding a child, touching an impure animal such as a crow, a dog or an ass (but not a cow or a cat), touching a person not ritually clean, or touching objects regarded as unclean such as leather or even clothes not specially washed for *madi* pollute a person and end *manchi madi*. This state continues while cooking and serving food, but ends as soon as the person eats something. On eating any food *manchi madi* turns into *eda madi*. For the latter one has to have one's bath and wear silk. It is regarded as sufficiently pure, but not pure enough for important ceremonials and rituals. It will be observed that castes ranked higher in Telangana are those that observe *madi* strictly. Even among the priestly castes those who do not have complex elaborate rules are ranked relatively low. In fact the Jangam, Tammadi and Madapati are ranked lower than non-priestly Niyogis and Vaishnava Karnam because unlike the last two they do not have rigid rules of ritual purity. It should also be noted that the Komti, who

represent the next level in Hindu caste hierarchy observe this purity only once a month and on days of important fasts and feasts. Below the Vaishya level there are no elaborate rules and consequently the castes on the levels that follow are regarded as lower than the Brahman, the non-Brahman priestly castes, and the Vaishyas.

Every Hindu caste has some ideas of pollution and also some methods by which it could be avoided or washed off. Endogamy and restrictions on commensality seek to preserve the purity of a caste, and any infringement of these rules automatically leads to pollution. Admittance into the higher castes is practically impossible, but it is possible into some of the lowest castes. Castes on the highest level accept food only from persons of their own group, or from a few equal groups for the touch of others defiles and pollutes it. Upper castes tend to be rather exclusive in the matter of commensality. As a rule it could be said that the lower the caste the larger is the number of castes from whom it can accept food, and in reverse, the higher the caste the lesser is the number of castes from whom it may accept food. Crises of life such as birth, menstruation, and death are attended by pollution. In Telengana child-birth is followed by *purudu*, menstruation by *muttu*, and death by *sutakam* or *susstu*. All castes recognize these pollutions, but observances connected with them are most strict among the higher castes, moderate in the middle groups, and minimal in the lower groups. For example, the higher castes observe *purudu* for seven to ten days; the lower castes for three days only. The nature of death pollution depends on the nature of relationship between a person and the deceased, but among the lower castes it is not observed for ten to fifteen days as it is observed among the Brahmans and Komtis. Among the *madi*-observing castes a woman cannot enter into ritual purity before the fifth day of menstruation, in the other castes she can resume cooking on the third day.

The nature of prescribed daily ritual and its observance also materially contribute to the ritual status of a caste. The Brahmans and priestly castes have to have a purificatory bath every day and have prescribed hours of worship. Next to them the Komtis also have such rules, although they are less rigid. As we go lower down in the hierarchy we find that the rules become less and less strict. The ritual of the lower caste is much less Sanskritised. On the lower levels the Brahman does not officiate as a priest. Observance of rules connected with the ritual of the life-cycle also determines the rank of a caste. Some people regard the Aradhyas as lower than the Vaidiki Brahmans because they bury their dead, and the classical Hindu ritual of the life-cycle lays down that burial is a lower form of disposal of the dead than cremation.

Hierarchy of foods and occupations also materially contributes

to the social ranking of castes. The Shri Vaishnava are regarded as lower than the Nambu, because unlike the latter they do not abstain from meat and liquor. The Niyogis and the Vaishnava Karnam are ranked lower than their priestly counter-parts because of their non-priestly occupation which is rated relatively lower. The barber and the washerman rank lowest among the agricultural-artisan castes because of their unclean vocations. The Erkalas are low because they keep pigs and the Madiga are the lowest because they deal with dead cattle.

The main criteria used for the ranking of castes in the country-side are ritual and not economic. Some of the considerations delineated above help us to understand the principles underlying the ranking of castes in Hindu society, but it must be added that they do not illuminate all aspects of it. For example they do not explain why Prathamshaka Brahmans are somewhat lower than the Yajurshakha Brahmans. To understand this recourse must be had to myth and tradition. It does not also explain the ritually 'impure' position of the Panch Brahma caste whose occupations are relatively clean. Historical hypotheses have been offered to explain this. According to one view in the past the highly organized artisan guilds maintained their exclusiveness and resisted their assimilation into the fold of Hindu society for a long time and in the process created a prejudice against themselves in the other segments of the Hindu society, and the other view is that they made an attempt to rise in the social hierarchy by a thorough Sanskritisation of their ritual and aroused hostility of other castes. We still cannot understand how the Mala—a caste of agriculturists and agricultural labourers—who refrain from pork and carrion in this region, are untouchables and rank only just a little higher than the carrion eating Madigas. Here too the answer must be found in myth and tradition.

INTER-CASTE RELATIONS IN GOHANAKALLAN
—A VILLAGE NEAR LUCKNOW

D. N. MAJUMDAR, M. C. PRADHAN, C. SEN AND S. MISRA

[1]

Gohanakallan is a village in the Mohana *parganah* of the Malhiabad Tehsil, in Lucknow District. It is situated at a distance of about 8 miles from Lucknow and $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Bakshi-ka-Talab, which incidentally, is the Ford Foundation Centre for training Village Level Workers, (popularly known as V.L.W.). Gohanakallan includes three satellite villages—Malak, Lohungpur, and Balapur—which are situated around it within a radius of one mile. In 1862, at the time of the First Land Settlement, this village had only Malak as its satellite. The other two have come into existence during the intervening period. These newly sprung hamlets are inhabited mostly by the Ahir caste. In Gohanakallan proper the dominant group is represented by the members of the Thakur caste, who owned most of the land in the past. The Thakurs and the Ahirs maintain a mutually recognised distance between them in their social relations and they are both proud of their own status.

There are 603* people in the village—335 males and 268 females, the sex ratio being 80 females for every 100 males. The dominant caste is the Thakur with 129 persons, but quantitatively the Chamars rank highest with 141 members. A particular feature in North India is a low female ratio among the highest castes, but the ratio increases as one goes down the caste ladder. The Brahmins are very few in this village numbering 6 males and 3 females. The table given below shows the number of males and females among some of the other castes in this village.

<i>Name of the castes</i>	<i>No. of Males</i>	<i>No. of females</i>
Thakur	78	51
Chamar	72	69
Ahir	33	32
Kumhar	20	14
Lohar	4	6

There are 15 different castes in this village—Chamar, Thakur, Pasi, Ahir, Kumhar, Dhobi, Nai, Barhai, Kalwar, Brahmin, Gareria, Lohar, Baksor, Rajput and Kurmi.

* All demographic data are from the final field census, carried out in March 1955.

The Chamar form 23.5 percent of the population of the village.

The Rajput	21.5 percent
The Pasi	18.5 percent
The Ahir	10.8 percent
The other eleven castes	25.8 percent

Gohanakallan being in the vicinity of Lucknow has many contacts with the city. A study of the results of these contacts is being made by the field team of the Cornell—Lucknow Research Centre with its head quarters in the Department of Anthropology of the Lucknow University. The villagers come to Lucknow daily and as often as they want to. They come by train, on cycle or on foot. Some leave their families in the village and live in the city. The agricultural labourers frequent Lucknow to see their absentee landlords and employers who own many acres of cultivated land in the village or in the neighbourhood. In spite of these contacts the village has not shown much progress. There is one primary school which functions by fits and starts. At times it is full of life and vigour, and at other times, it closes all its doors and falls asleep and remains in this dormant state for weeks or even months. It is not quite clear as to who is vested with power to run this school. Only one person in the village claims to have had higher education and the lofty hill which he has scaled is only the VIIIth grade. The atmosphere of the village is feudal, and the pattern of rural life, mediaeval.

However, the abolition of the Zemindari System has already affected the social framework of the village. The so-called lower castes refuse to render services which they have so far been rendering to the high caste people. The barber, for example, refuses to draw water for the Thakurs. He will not wash their utensils and remove their leaf-plates as he did before in return for a fixed quantity of grain at each harvest. The Chamars refuse to work *begar* for the higher castes. No doubt, this deviation from the rigid caste conventions and social rules, will thoroughly change the pattern of life in the village, and this is being looked into by the field team stationed at Gohanakallan, by planned observation and through questionnaires and interviews. Below we give an abridged account of the inter-caste relations in the village, the detailed study is reserved for a more ambitious publication soon.

[2]

The caste system has a greater hold in the rural areas than in the cities today. Relations between different castes were standardized in earlier days and any deviation from these standards were not tolerated. The people of the higher castes exercised rigid control over

the behaviour of the lower castes. The castes were divided into water-tight compartments with certain rules and regulations to govern social behaviour. The latter are likely to undergo changes when different castes come into close contact with outsiders in their daily lives. Economic considerations compel the villagers to migrate to the towns in search of employment. This increasing urban contact accelerates the change. As a result of these changes, the lower castes are emerging as winners against the battle of the rigid and, sometimes, humiliating regulations. There is a desire among the lower castes to rise on the social ladder. They are resenting the rude treatment from the higher castes.

There is a certain fixed gradation of all the castes according to the respect and status enjoyed by each caste. Highest in the hierarchy of castes come the Brahmins. The Thakurs, who are the most influential group of people in the village, consider themselves inferior only to the Brahmins. Every Thakur touches the feet of the Brahmin by way of showing respect to the latter. The respect which the Brahmins enjoy is merely conventional; in daily life, however, the Brahmins are treated on an equal footing with the other castes. When there is a clash of interest between a Brahmin and a man of any other caste, the latter does not hesitate to justify his stand. People may show respect to the Brahmins but they are not prepared to suffer at their hands. There was an incident in the village recently, when Ajodhya Singh beat a "Panditani" (a Brahmin woman). The Panditani was known to be a thief. She had stolen certain things from a house and in order to divert suspicion from herself she had accused an innocent woman with her own guilt. She even harassed her and forced her to a false confession of theft. Ajodhya Singh knew who the actual culprit was and supported the innocent woman. The Panditani shouted and accused the other woman. Ajodhya Singh slapped the Panditani in the face. The matter ended then and there.

The Thakurs are the most influential group of people in the village because they are economically better off. They own most of the agricultural land in the village. They are the landlords who give employment to the other caste-people. The various other castes serve the Thakurs as their dependants. The Thakurs have given some of them certain pieces of land, free of tax, as reward for their services.

AT BIRTH

At the birth of a Thakur child the Pandit or Brahmin is called to note the time of birth and prepare the *Janampatri* (horoscope) of the child and to decide the most auspicious date and time for

Chhatti and *Barah*. The Pandit gets the *neg* (payment) of Re. 1/- if a boy is born and eight annas if a girl is born. He does not dine on either of the two occasions. When Ram Pal Singh's son was born a couple of months back, Thakur Din Shukla was called to prepare the *Janampatri* and decide the auspicious days for *Chhatti* and *Barah* ceremonies. Thakur Din Shukla accepted the customary *neg* but did not dine at Ram Pal Singh's house on either occasion. The Ahirs do not go at the birth of a Thakur's child or on the *Chhatti* or *Barah*. The Kurmis also do not go at the birth of a Thakur child but they attend the feasts given on *Chhatti* and *Barah*. The Kurmis accept only *pakka* food (food cooked in *ghee*) from the Thakurs.

In the Zemindari days the Lohar used to supply the *Choora* or *Kara* (bangles made of iron), *Kajrauta* (a small iron case to keep the *kajal* or lampblack) and a knife at the birth of a Thakur child. In return, he was given 2½ to 5 seers of grain and was also awarded some *jagir* (a piece of free land) by the Thakur. When Gajadhar was born, Parag Lohar went with the customary things and Gajadhar's father, Vishwanath Singh Mukhia, gave away 2 *biswas* of land to Parag to cultivate free of tax. But now the Lohar supplies these things only at the birth of the first child in a Thakur family. At the birth of Ram Pal Singh's third child Parag did not supply anything. Lohars can attend both the *kachcha* as well as the *pakka* feast on *Chhatti* and *Barah*. Kumhars do not go to a Thakur's house at the birth of a child in the family, because there is no work for the Kumhar at this occasion. But on *Chhatti* and *Barah* they attend the feast, if invited by the Thakurs. Kumhars do not sit with the Thakurs in the same row, but a little distance away with their own caste people.

Both the Nai (barber) and Naain (barber's wife) have a lot of work to do at the birth of a Thakur child. The Naain attends to the expectant mother during confinement, and after child-birth from *Chhatti* to *Barah* she massages the mother and child with *tel* or mustard oil. She also applies *ubtan* to the body of the mother and child at the ceremonial bath on *Chhatti*. (Note—*ubtan* is used instead of soap in the village. It consists of wheat flour, powdered turmeric and mustard oil.) The Naain also plasters the house with cowdung and yellow clay. She whitewashes the walls with *Chikni Mitti* (fine earth) and cleans the *Sohar* (place where the child was born). In return for all this work the Naain gets 4 *panseri* (*kacchi*) or 8 seers of grain at the birth of a boy and 3 *panseri* (*kacchi*) or 6 seers of grain if a girl is born. Bhagwati Nai's wife served at the birth of Ram Pal Singh's child. In return for her work she got eight seers of grain. A few months back a girl was born in Thakur Rameshwar Singh's house. The Naain in attendance received 6 seers of grain. The Naain also helps

in cooking food in a *pakki dawat* (feast). Bhagwati Nai's wife cooked the food for the *pakki dawat* at Thakur Rameshwar Singh's place. The Nai acts as the messenger and invites all the relatives and friends to the feast. At a *pakki dawat*, he (Nai) serves *poories* and vegetables as well as water to the guests. He also pours water to wash the hands of all the guests before and after the feast.

The Pasis are called at the birth of a Thakur child to carry the news and are provided with food. They also supply the *pattal* (leaf-plates) in *Chhatti* and *Barah* and are given food on these occasions. They demand gifts or *neg* which are given according to the economic status of the Thakur. The gift includes a *dhoti*, ready-made shirt, utensils and money. In the olden days they were also given *jagirs* but not so now.

The Dhobi does the same kind of work for all the castes at the birth of a child. The clothes of the mother and child, from birth to the last *nahan* (bath) are washed by the Dhobi. These dirty clothes are given at different intervals. All the clothes from the birth of a child to the last *nahan* are termed as *utahiah* (collection of dirty clothes). For washing the *utahiah*, a Dhobi is given 6 *panseri* (*kacchi*) of coarse grain at the birth of a male child and 3 *panseri* (*kacchi*) at the birth of a female child.

Bhaksorin (Bhaksor's wife) is called at the birth of a child to help in delivery. She cuts the umbilical cord and cleans the dirty clothes after child birth. She massages the mother for 4 or 5 days after child birth before the Naain takes over. She also gives the first *nahan* (bath) to the mother. She is given 4 or 5 *panseri* (*kacchi*) (i.e., 8 or 10 seers) of coarse grain and food on the birth of a boy and half the amount of grain at a girl's birth. After the 5th day she has no work to do, but is provided with food on *Chhatti* and *Barah*.

AT MUNDAN

The Pandit decides the auspicious day for *Mundan* (ceremonial hair-cutting of a child). He decides the hour for the ceremony. The Nai cuts the hair of the child while the Pandit recites some Sanskrit *slokas* invoking God to give a long and happy life to the child. The Pandit gets the *neg* of Rs. 1/4/- for reciting the *slokas*. He also participates in the *Mundan* feast in the sense that he is given all the ingredients of the food which he cooks himself and takes it at the Thakur's place. After the hair is cut, he takes a *loi* (ball) of kneaded flour and applies it to the child's shaven head. This is known as *loi-pherna* and the Pandit gets the *neg* of Re. 1/4/- for this too. Generally, Thakur Din Shukla goes to the *Mundan* at a Thakur's place. He was asked to perform the *Mundan* ceremony

at the birth of Thakur Ram Pal Singh's son and received in all Rs. 2/8/- as *neg*. The Ahirs do not participate in the *Mundan* ceremony at a Thakur's place. They may, however, attend the *pakki dawat* if invited by the Thakur.

The Kurmis attend the *Mundan* ceremony if invited by the Thakurs. They accept only *pakka* food from the Thakurs.

The Lohars bring *akhats* (grain) as gift in the *Mundan* ceremony and get in return 5 *batashas* (small sugar cakes). They also attend the feast on this occasion, if invited to do so. At the *Mundan* ceremony of Dukh Haran Singh, son of Vishwanath Singh Mukhia, Parag Lohar brought the present of *akhats* for Vishwanath Singh. In return he got the *prasad* (sanctified food offering) of 5 *batasha*. He also attended the feast on this occasion.

The Kumhars supply *kulhars* (clay glasses) and other earthen pots on *Mundan* and get in return some grain, the quantity of which is not fixed but depends on the amount of earthenware he supplies. They also participate in the feast. In the Zemindari days, the Kumhar used to get *chinh* (gift) in the form of clothes and utensils at the *Mundan* of the first male child in a Thakur's family. Now, of course, it has become impossible for anyone to give away such lavish gifts on *Mundan*. At the *Mundan* ceremony of the eldest son Bindra Singh (28), his father, Jadunath Singh, had given away the *chinh* (gifts) of five clothes—a *kurta*, *dhoti*, *saluka*, *angochcha* and a *topi*—as well as a *lota* and a glass to Prabhu Kumhar. But now, after the abolition of the Zemindari system and the resulting economic stringency, it has become impossible for the Thakurs to be lavish in giving away presents on any occasion of joy.

On *Mundan*, the Nai cuts the hair of the child and gets a *neg* of Re. 1/- to Rs. 1/8/- plus two meals. The Nai and the Naain do practically the same kind of work as on *Chatti*. If there is a *pakki dawat* on this occasion, the Naain helps prepare the food and the Nai serves water at the feast. He cannot serve water at a *kachchi dawat* (where food consisting of bread and *dal* is served). Gajraj Nai cut the hair of Ram Pal Singh's child on *Mundan*.

The Pasis are called to carry the invitations to other villages if there is a feast on *Mundan*. They supply the *Pattal* (leaf-plates) for the feast and get in return food as well as *nichchawar* (money) and some gift. The Pasis have their food after the Thakurs and other high caste people have had theirs. Chheda, Shiva Charan, Kali Din, Lootoo, Jai Karan and Diwan Pasis are those who are generally asked to carry the invitations on behalf of the Thakurs. In return for their work they receive some reward.

The Dhobis have no specific work to do on the *Mundan* of a Thakur child. But they come and ask for their *inam* (tips) and get it in the form of cash or gift. The Dhobis are given cooked food which

they take home. Dhondhey, Fakiray, Nanhkoo and Ghuru Dhobis go to their *jajmans'* (permanent clients) house on the *Mundan* ceremony and ask for the *inam*. They are given from 4 annas to Re. 1/- and some *pakka* food (*poories*, *kachauries*, *saag*, *raita*, etc.) to take home and eat it there.

The Chamars too have no work to perform on *Mundan*. They may come for *inam* only and may be given food if it can be afforded. Only Chamars who are employed by the Thakurs as their servants go to the Thakur houses for the *inam*. Makhana, Kallu and Gokaran who work for Ahibaran Singh, Ajodhya Singh and Rabhbir Singh respectively, go for their *inam* on *Mundan* to their master's house.

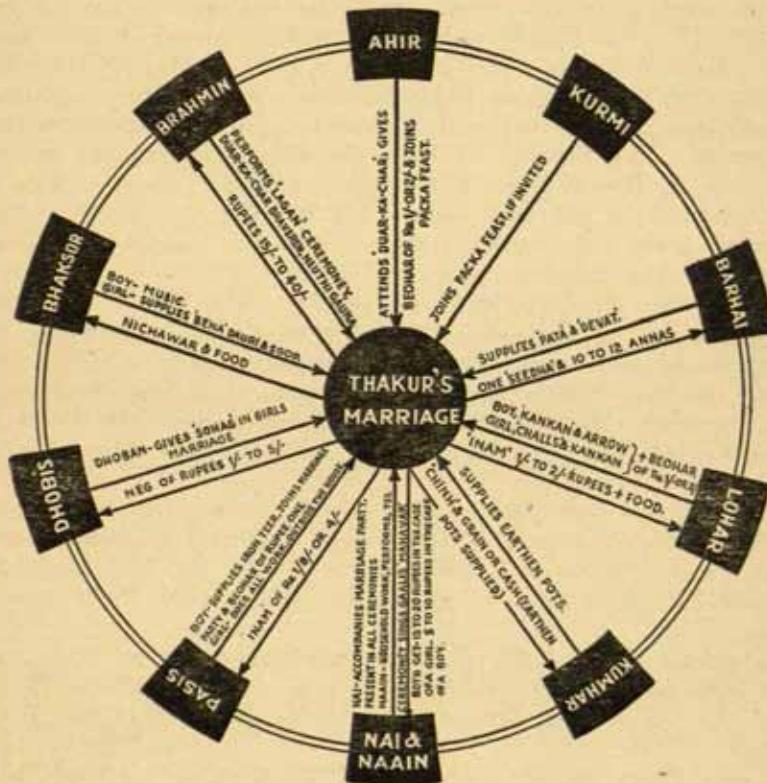


Fig. I.

The Bhaksors also have no particular work on *Mundan*. But when the ceremony is performed on a large scale with musical performances, the Bhaksors bring their musical instruments and give a recital. They are given food for the day. Sewak and Mulabey Bhaksors brought their musical instruments on the *Mundan*

ceremony of Ram Narain, eldest son of Ajodhya Singh. They were given Rs. 1/8/- as well as food for their musical performance.

AT MARRIAGE

In the marriages of Thakurs, the Pandit performs the ceremonies of *lagan* when the bride's father sends presents of clothes, ornaments and cash as well as *narial* (cocoanut) and *suparis* (betelnuts) etc., to the bridegroom. The Pandit performs the religious ceremony of *chawkpurna*. He draws a square bearing some religious significance on the ground with dry wheat flour. All the presents are kept in the square and the bridegroom sits in front of the *chawk*. The Pandit reads some Sanskrit verses from a sacred book which completes the ceremony. For performing the *lagan* ceremony the Pandit comes from the bride's place. He accompanies the marriage party to the bride's place to perform various religious ceremonies. The Pandits of both the sides perform the religious ceremony of *dwar-ki-char* when the marriage party visits the bride's house for the first time. But because the people of the village are poor, they generally do not take the Pandit of their own village with the marriage party and get the Pandit of the bride's side to perform all the religious ceremonies. The Pandit also directs the ceremony of *bhawren* (The bride and the bridegroom take seven rounds of the sacred fire). The Pandit chants different verses for the various rituals performed by the bride and bridegroom. After the seven rounds he extracts an oath from both the bride and bridegroom to lead a life of harmony, treating each other as equals and with consideration.

In the *neutni* ceremony (one of the marriage ceremonies which is held in the "Janwasa"*) the Pandit performs the ceremony of calling out the names of the forefathers of both the bride and bridegroom and invoking them to look upon them from their heavenly abode.

In *gauna* the Pandit does not accompany the bridegroom. From *lagan* to marriage the Pandit gets from Rs. 15/- to Rs. 40/- for all the ceremonies, depending upon the capacity of the Thakur to pay.

Sharda Prasad Shukla accompanied the marriage party of Thakur Gajadhar Singh and performed all the marriage rituals. For his service, he got Rs. 17/- only.

Ahirs are invited to attend the marriage in a Thakur house. In the case of a girl's marriage the invitation is given for *dwar-ki-char* ceremony (when the marriage party arrives at the bride's door).

* "Janwasa" is the place where the marriage party stays in the bride's village.

The Ahirs give presents in cash i.e., Re. 1/- or Rs. 2/- at this occasion. The invitation is quite formal and due to lack of intimate contacts between the two castes, Ahirs rarely ever go to attend the marriages of Thakurs. But in Thakur Ajodhya Singh's marriage Tori Ahir's father had participated because Ajodhya Singh was on friendly terms with Tori's father, who gave Rs. 2/- as present. They also attended the *pakki dawat* on this occasion. They do not, however, attend *bhat-ki-dawat* because *kachcha* food is served in this *dawat*, and Ahirs do not eat *kachcha* food at a Thakur's place.

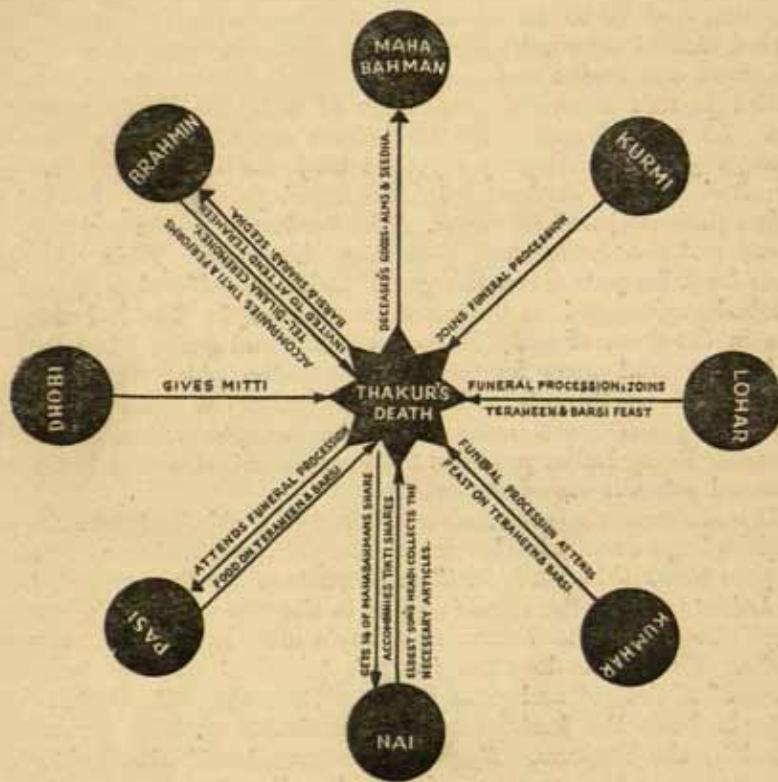


Fig. II.

The Ahirs may be invited to accompany a Thakur's marriage party. They only accept the *pakka* food and if there is a *kachchi dawat* they are provided with flour, rice, pulses and other requirements and they cook their own food. In the *pakka* feast they sit together with the Thakurs in the same row.

Kurmis are invited to attend the marriages of Thakur boys and girls. They also accompany the marriage party of boys. Janga

Kurmi (aged 65) said that Thakurs and Kurmis sit together at the feast and there is no caste discrimination in a marriage feast. But the Thakurs contradicted his statement and said that Thakurs and Kurmis do not sit together in the feasts. Janga says that cash presents are given on this occasion. If a Thakur gives one rupee as a present the Kurmi always tries to return double the amount. But Janga, the only Kurmi of the village, being very poor, has never been able to give any present at all.

The Barahi supplies the *pata* and *divat* (clay oil lamp) and gets in return one *seedha* which includes flour, pulses, salt, *ghee*, rice, etc., and 10 to 12 annas. In Thakur Gajadhar's marriage Bal Govind Barhai supplied the *pata* and *divat*, in return for which he was given one *seedha* and 5 annas.

The Lohars attend the marriage of both the Thakur boys and girls. At a boy's marriage the Lohars are not usually invited to accompany the marriage party, but they can accompany the party if invited by the Thakurs. In the marriage of a boy he brings a *kankan* (bracelet) and an arrow. The *kankan* is considered very auspicious and the bridegroom puts it on his wrist. When the party comes back he puts these things off under the *Mandap* (the sacred thatched roof erected for the marriage ceremony). The Lohar is given *inam* in the form of cash, clothes, utensils and grain, when he brings the *kankan* and arrow for the groom. In the olden days the Lohar used to get anything from Re. 1/- to Rs. 5/- as *inam*. Nowadays he may be given 6 or 8 annas which he accepts without hesitation. Generally Parag Lohar provides the *kankan* and arrow on these occasions and gets the *neg* of 8 annas.

At a girl's marriage the Lohar brings 4 to 6 *chhalla* (plain rings) for the girl's fingers and a *kankan* which the girl wears on the *tel* ceremony. She puts these things off on *Bida* (departure for the groom's house). The Lohar is given the same *inam* as in the case of a boy's marriage. He gets food for 6 to 7 days at a boy's marriage and for 4 days in a girl's. The Lohar does the *dan pun* (alms) of one or two annas on behalf of the girl and gives it to the Brahmin. The Lohars participate in both the *kachcha* and *pakka* feasts on this occasion, if invited by the Thakurs. *Byohar* is reciprocal. If the Lohar gives some money in the marriage of a Thakur it is taken account of and returned whenever there is a marriage at the Lohar's house. The Thakur, however, does not stay at the house of the Lohar after paying the *byohar*. No examples can be cited because there has been no marriage in a Lohar's house for a number of years.

The Lohars invite the Thakurs to accompany their marriage party. Thakurs willingly join the marriage party if they are provided with *pakka* food and sweets.

The Kumhars supply the required number of earthen pots and

kulhars etc., at a Thakur boy's marriage. The Kumhars do not accompany the marriage party, but get the food for one person who supplies the earthen pots. They get either cash or grain in return, according to the number of pots supplied. Sometimes they get *chinh* in the form of *dhoti*, utensils and clothes. Prabhu Kumhar said that *chinh* had become very rare now because the Thakurs prefer to dispose of their *Praja* (tenants) by giving cash only. Tanni Kumhar supplied the requisite clay utensils in Thakur Ram Naresh Singh's marriage. He was given, in return, Rs. 1/4/- only. They supply the same kind of earthen pots for a girl's marriage and are given food for the whole marriage period. They get the *nichchawar* from both sides, mainly at *Bhawnren*, and *Bida*. The *nichchawar* usually comprises of a few rupees, about Rs. 2/- to Rs. 4/-. Prabhu Kumhar supplied the earthenwares at the marriage of Phool Mati (daughter of Muneshwar Singh). He was given food for the entire marriage period and Rs. 2/8/- in all.

In a Thakur's marriage, from the day of *lagan* to the completion of the marriage ceremony both *Nai* and *Naain* work at both the bride and bridegroom's places. The *Naain* does all the household work, from plastering the floor with cowdung and yellow clay and whitewashing the walls with *chikni mitti* to washing the utensils, kneading the flour and any other work she might be asked to do. But the chief function of the *Naain* begins from the day of *tel* when she massages the body of the bride with oil and *ubtan* and helps her bathe. The *Naain* helps in singing songs on the night of *taai*. On *taai* the women of the two houses worship the *chakki* (grinding stone) and *choola* (oven). The *Naain* also sings *galis* (abuses) to the marriage party. She also helps the women of the house in preparing different food dishes. She may be asked to give the invitations to the women of the same *biradari*, living in the village. She applies *mahavar* to the bride's feet, and gives a glass of water to the bride when she starts from her mother's house for her husband's place. The *Nai* accompanies the marriage party and does all the work for them. He serves the guests, washes their clothes, draws water from the well for their bath, fills the *chilam*. He pays special attention to the groom. He also accompanies the bridegroom to the bride's house along with the Pandit when the 'groom goes for the *Bhawren* ceremony. He ties the corner of the groom's shirt to the corner of the bride's *saree*. He helps the Pandit in *chawak-purna*. Both the *Nai* and *Naain* remain in attendance to the groom and bride respectively. The *Naain* brings the bride to the *Mandap* and helps her to perform the various rituals. In *gauna*, or "delayed" marriage, the *Nai* accompanies the groom to the bride's place and looks after him. The poor, however, do not engage him for the *gauna* ceremony due to monetary considerations.

In return for his work in a Thakur's marriage, the Nai gets the *nichchawar* (some money payment) according to the means of the family. He also gets the *neg* for bathing the groom just before he starts off for his father-in-law's house. The Naain gets the *neg* for cutting the nails of the bride before the *Bhawren* ceremony. At a girl's marriage the Nai and Naain together get about 15 to 20 rupees. At a boy's marriage they get only 5 to 10 rupees. At a girl's marriage the Naain also gets the *neg* for singing the *gali* (abuses) when the marriage party arrives to take the *bhaat-ki-dawat*. She also gets *dwar-ke-char-ka-haq* when the marriage party goes to the girl's house for the first time. The Nai gets a *neg* when he goes to the *Janwasa* (marriage party's staying place) with two earthen jars full of *sherbat*. For each jar the *neg* of Re. 1/- is given. He gets the *biddai-ka-neg* at the departure of the marriage party—about Re. 1/- or Rs. 2/-. Then he gets the *shishta-char-ka-neg* at the time of *neutni*. The Naai and Naain do not demand less than a rupee but they get according to the means of the giver.

Bhagwati Nai and his wife were called to work at the marriage of Phool Mati (daughter of Muneshwar Singh). Thakur Muneshwar Singh not being a very well-to-do person, gave Bhagwati Nai and his wife only Rs. 11/- for their work.

At Gajadhar's marriage Bhagwati Nai and his wife did all the required work and got in return Rs. 4/- in all.

The Pasis are asked to accompany a Thakur's marriage party, and they have proved themselves so reliable that they are sent in charge of the gold and silver ornaments. When the bridegroom goes to the bride's place, he is accompanied by a Pasi who leaves the bridegroom at the door. Divan, Jai Karan, Lootoo, Lalidin, Lachchman and Nanhe are considered very reliable and are asked to accompany the marriage parties of the Thakurs to look after the valuable things. The Pasis supply the *pattal* (leaf plates) for the wedding feast. They give the *byohar* (present) of one or two rupees on the marriage of a Thakur boy or girl. The Thakurs return double the amount in the Pasi's marriage.

At a Thakur girl's marriage, the Pasis bring a *nand* (tub) of clay and *kullhars* (glasses) from the Kumhar's house and clothes from the Darzi (tailor). They call the Mali (gardener) on ceremonial occasions. The Pasis remain in attendance to the Thakur's family all the day. The Pasi's family is provided with food both times. From the bridegroom's side the Pasis get some gift in the form of money or silver ornaments. In the marriage of Phool Mati, Thakur Muneshwar Singh's daughter, last year Kali Din Pasi supplied the above mentioned things and remained in attendance. In return he got Rs. 2/8/- as reward for his work.

At a boy's marriage they do the same kind of work as at a girl's. They bring an iron *teer* (arrow) at the departure of the marriage party and give it to the bridegroom. They get the *nichchawar* of Rs. 1/4/- to Rs. 5/-. They usually get Rs. 2/- to Rs. 4/- in a boy's marriage, besides getting the food—*kachcha* and *pakka* both. In the marriage of Ram Naresh Singh, son of Bindra Singh, Shiv Charan Pasi brought the iron *teer* and accompanied the bridegroom to bride's house. In return for his work he got about Rs. 4/-.

The Thakurs also participate in a Pasi's wedding, if invited to do so. After giving the *byohar* (customary gift) they return home, without eating anything or even accepting water at the Pasi's place. Among the Thakurs who attended the marriage of Shiv Kumar Pasi (son of Jai Karan Pasi) were Thakur Ajodhya Singh, Ahibaran Singh, Murari Singh, Jaskaran Singh and Gajadhar Singh. After giving the *byohar* of Re. 1/- or Rs. 2/- each, the Thakurs came away without taking any food with the Pasis.

At the marriage of a Thakur girl both the Dhobi and his wife have certain particular jobs assigned to them. They get their food at the Thakur's place for four to seven days. On the second day of marriage the Dhobin is called to give the *sohag*. She fills the parting of the bride's hair with *sindur* (vermillion). She gets Re. 1/- to Rs. 5/- as the *neg*, or she may be given a *saree*. At the marriage of Phool Mati (Muneshwar Singh's daughter) the wife of Dubari Dhobi came to give the *sohag*. Both the Dhobi and his wife worked for the house and got Rs. 5/- as reward for their work. They were not given a *saree* because Vishwanath Singh is a poor man. The Dhobi has another job to perform. On the day of the marriage, the bridegroom's brother holds a piece of cloth, two and half yards in length, over the head of the couple. The Dhobi holds the other end of the cloth. Barley *khils* are showered on the couple and collected on this piece of cloth. The Dhobi gets *inam* for this in the form of cooking utensils, clothes or money. But now-a-days only money is given. Durbari Dhobi got the *neg* in the marriage of Gajadhar Singh, son of Thakur Vishwanath Singh. Dhobis, however, are not required to join the marriage parties. They pay *byohar* at a Thakur boy's marriage and get it back the same day with some addition. Thakurs go to Dhobi marriages but come back after paying the *byohar*, without taking either *kachcha* or *pakka* food.

The Chamars have nothing to do at a Thakur boy or girls' marriage. They may, if invited, accompany the marriage party of a Thakur boy. Kallu Chamar accompanied the marriage party of Thakur Rameshwar Singh, son of Jadunath Singh, *Sarpanch*.

The Bhaksor comes in the *main* and *tel* ceremonies (these are celebrated long before the actual marriage ceremony) with their *baja* (musical instruments) like *dhol*, *sarangi*, etc., and give

a musical performance. They give another musical performance at the marriage. They are given some grain and *nichchawar* (a few annas). Food is also given to them. They are called in the marriages of both girls and boys by the Thakurs for a musical performance. The charges in cash are settled beforehand.

At a girl's marriage the Bhaksor supplies the *bena* (fan), *soop* and *dauri* (basket) and gets the *nichchawar* and *bidai*. He and his family are also given food—*pakka* as well as *kachcha* so long as the marriage party stays there. In Phool Mati's marriage last year Mulha Bahksor supplied the *bena*, *soop* and *dauri*, in return for which he was given 9 annas.

At a boy's marriage he supplies the *dal* (a bamboo basket) in which the auspicious things for marriage are kept and carried to the bride's house. He is given the *neg* of Rs. 1/4/- for this. Sometimes he may get Rs. 2/- or even Rs. 5/-. He may also accompany the marriage party with the *baja* (music). The payment of Rs. 2/- to Rs. 5/- to a Bhaksor was made in the olden days when the Thakurs were prosperous. Today, the payment does not exceed Re. 1/- or Rs. 1/8/-. At Raja Ram's marriage Sewak Bhaksor supplied the *dal* and was given, Re. 1/- in return.

AT DEATH

The Lohars generally do not attend the death of a Thakur nor do they accompany the funeral procession. If a Lohar attends the funeral of a Thakur, it is due to intimate friendly relations. They however, participate in the feasts at *Teraheen* (13th day ceremony after death) and *Barsi* (death anniversary), when *pakka* food is served. Lohars do not accept *kachcha* food from the Thakurs. Parag Lohar participated in the funeral ceremony of Thakur Suraj Buksh Singh, Ajodhya Singh's father.

The Kumhars go at the death of a Thakur and also accompany the funeral procession. They participate in the mourning. They also attend the feasts on *Teraheen* and *Barsi*. Prabhu, Hira and Jagdo Kumhars accompanied the funeral procession of Raghbir Singh, (father of Iqbal Singh) and attended the *Teraheen* and *Barsi* feasts.

The Nai accompanies the *tikti* (coffin) of the Thakur to the *Marghat* (burning ghat) and shaves the head of the eldest son of the deceased. He does not get any payment for this work. At the death of a Thakur, Sarjoo and Bhagwati Nais usually go to shave the head of the eldest son. On the occasion of *Barsi* the Nai does all the household work. He gives out the invitations to all the people who are invited to the *Barsi* feast, and serves water to the guests at the *pakki dawat*.

The Pasis always accompany the Thakur's funeral procession. A Thakur, however, does not attend the funeral of a Pasi, but can go to see his *gorait* (servant) if he is very seriously ill. Kali Din Pasi, serving Thakur Ajodhya Singh, had fallen seriously ill a few months back. Ajodhya Singh went to see him. Pasis take the food at *Teraheen* and *Barsi*. In *Shradh* they are given food on one day, when the Pandits are called at the feast.

The Dhobies do not form part of the funeral procession of a Thakur. They come only to give *mitti*. The Thakurs never go to Dhobi funerals. The Chamars do not accompany a Thakur's funeral procession. The Bhaksors do not participate in the death rites of a Thakur nor do they accompany the funeral procession.

The Pandit, usually Shard Prasad Shukla, is asked to recite *katha* at a Thakur's place. The *katha* is called *Sat Narain ki katha* (the story of the true god). For reciting the *katha* the Pandit gets Re. 1/- to Rs. 1/4/-. Two months back Sharda Prasad Shukla was called to read the *katha* at Thakur Raghbir Singh's house. For reading the same he was given Rs. 1/4/-.

The Ahirs participate in *katha* at a Thakur's place and accept the *prasad* (sweets that had been offered to the gods) willingly. At the *katha* in the house of Thakur Jadu Nath Singh, Guru Prasad Ahir, Tori Ahir and others were present and also partook of the *prasad*. The Thakurs also attend *katha* at an Ahir's house and accept the *prasad*. Bhabuti Ahir arranged a *katha* in his house. Thakur Ajodhya Singh attended it and accepted the *prasad*, distributed by the Pandit, Sharda Prasad Shukla.

When a Thakur dies the Pandit accompanies the *tikti* (coffin) of the dead to the burning ghat and performs the ceremony of *tel dilana*. (The ancestors of the dead are offered *tel* or mustard oil to propitiate their spirits). On the *Teraheen* (13th day after the death) the Pandit receives alms from the members of the bereaved family, on behalf of the dead. He also participates in the feast by cooking his own meal and taking it at the Thakur's house. There is another feast at *Barsi* (first death anniversary), and the Pandit participates in it by cooking his own food and taking it there. In *Shradh* the Pandit is fed by the descendants of the dead. It is believed that during *Shradh* (which lasts for 15 days) the souls of all the dead ancestors of the family visit the house. Water is offered to the souls of the dead while the Pandit reads some *slokas* praying that the souls of the dead be kind to their living relations and cause no harm to them.

The Pandit may also receive the *Baitarani gai* (cow). It is believed that if a cow is given in alms to the Pandit, the soul of the deceased will get the cow by riding which he will be able to cross the mythical river of *Baitarani* in order to reach Heaven. There is a

sub-caste among the Brahmins, called *Maha Brahmins*. They receive the clothes and other personal belongings of the deceased, if the bereaved family can afford to part with them. In the Zemindari days when the Thakur landlords were rich they used to give the Maha Brahman a cot, a jug, blankets, "razais" (cotton-wool blankets), bed sheets, umbrellas, cows, buffaloes, horses, etc. But not so now. About 13 years ago when Thakur Ahibaran Singh's father died Gangoolay Maharaj (Mahabrahman) of the village Asthi received the clothes and a *lota*, a glass, a *thali*, a *katori* and a *chammach* (spoon) belonging to the dead person.

Ahirs do not go on the death of a Thakur nor do they accompany the funeral procession to the burning *ghat*. They do not consider it proper to attend the feast on *Barsi* (first death anniversary). If a certain Ahir happens to be on very friendly terms with a Thakur, he may, of course, accompany the funeral procession when the Thakur dies. Tori Ahir was on very good terms with Ahibaran Singh's father. So when the latter died he (Tori) accompanied the funeral procession to the burning *ghat*.

The Kurmis accompany the funeral procession at the death of a Thakur and take part in the death rituals, such as taking bath at the *margin* (burning *ghat*) and participating in the mourning. They, however, hesitate to attend the feast on *Barsi*. There is only one Kurmi in the village who is an old man, 65 years of age, called Janga. Janga is on very good terms with most of the Thakurs and almost invariably goes to attend the funeral ceremonies of a Thakur.

The Barahis have no work to do at the death of a Thakur. They do not accompany the funeral procession either.

AT KATHA

The Thakurs invite Kurmis to attend the *katha* at their place and take the *prasad*. Likewise Thakurs accept the *prasad* from the Kurmis whenever there is *katha* at the Kurmi's house. *Prasad* consists of fruits and sweets. Janga Kurmi always attends the Thakur's *katha*. He himself has never arranged one for many years. The essential part of the *prasad* is *panjiri* which consists of roasted flour with sugar and certain dry fruits added to it.

Thakurs attend the *katha* at a Lohar's place and offer a pice or two on the *Arti* and take the *prasad*. Parag Lohar arranged a *katha* at his place a few months back. All the prominent Thakurs of the village, like Jadu Nath Singh, Rabbir Singh, Ajodhya Singh, Maharaj Singh, and others attended the *katha* and accepted the *prasad* distributed by Sharda Prasad Shukla.

The Kumhar supplies a clay pot known as *kalas* in which water is kept and a lamp is lighted over it. In return he gets one anna and some grain. The Kumhar offers a pice or two on the *Arti* and takes the *prasad*. Prabhu Kumhar supplied the *kalas* for the *katha* arranged by Jadoo Nath Singh. He offered one pice on the *Arti*. In return he got the *prasad* and some grain, like *savān kodon* (generally coarse grain).

When there is *katha* at a Thakur's house, the Nai is called to do the household work and give out the invitations. He gets 6 pice plus food for the day. Sarjoo Nai was in attendance at the *katha* arranged by Thakur Raghbir Singh. He was given one anna and food for the day.

If there is *katha* at a Thakur's place, the Pasis supply the *pattal* (leaf plates) and carry the invitations also. They are given the *prasad* and one meal. Shiv Charan Pasi supplied the *pattal* in the *katha* arranged by Thakur Jadoo Nath Singh, *Sarpanch*.

The Thakurs generally avoid going to a Dhobi's house. But they go in the *kathas* arranged by the Dhobis and accept *prasad* only if it is prepared by a Brahmin. In recent years none of the Dhobis have arranged any *katha* at their house.

The Pandit refuses to say *katha* in the house of a Chamar. If the Chamars wish to arrange a *katha* the Pandit performs it at the *Deo-sthan*. This is a sacred Neem tree in front of Bhagwati Nai's house on which the goddess Durga is believed to stay. There is another sacred *peepal* tree in front of Puran Bhagat Chamar's house on which the Bhuniya Devi is supposed to reside. The Pandit goes to either of these two trees and says the *katha* there. The Thakurs do not attend the *katha* arranged by the Chamars.

The Bhaksors come to take the *prasad* if there is *katha* at a Thakur's place. Bewak Bhaksor was given the *prasad* at Thakur Jadoo Nath Singh's *katha*. In recent years the two Bhaksor families of the village have not arranged a *katha* of their own.

The Brahmins are superior to the Thakurs in caste status. They cannot accept *kachcha* food (bread, rice, dal etc.), at a Thakur's house or prepared by a Thakur. On the other hand, Thakurs can and do accept *kachcha* food in a Brahmin's house on marriage and other ceremonies. The Brahmins do not even take *pakka* food (prepared in *ghee*) in a Thakur's house on any occasion. They take the raw materials like flour and vegetables and cook their own meals with their own hands at the place where they are invited in marriage ceremonies, or *Mundan*, *Katha* or *Barsi*, etc. The Brahmins can, however, eat sweets made out of milk and curds prepared in a Thakur's house. The Brahmins who have been to school and are educated or have been in service in towns or cities like Sharda Prasad Shukla do not observe the conventional restrictions in taking food. They

eat in the hotels where usually there is a Kahar or a Muslim cook.

The Shukla Brahmins of the village do not take even *pakka* food prepared by any one except a Brahmin, even though many of them have been to the city. There is just one exception to it. Sharda Prasad Shukla (the *purohit* or priest of the village) had been in the army as a compounder in the Medical Corps and had visited different places in India and Burma. He has no hesitation in taking *kachcha* or *pakka* food from people of any caste.

In a *pakka* feast the Ahirs sit together with the Thakurs in the same line. The Ahirs are of the opinion that when a man of one caste can take water from another caste, the two castes should have no objection in taking food together. Guru Prasad Ahir told us that there was no harm in accepting *pakka* food from the Thakurs, as the Ahirs do not mind eating in hotels now-a-days, where food is cooked by the lower caste people, like Kahars. The Ahirs do not, however, accept *kachcha* food from the Thakurs because the latter generally take meat, while most of the Ahirs are "Bhagats" and are prohibited to take meat and *kachcha* food from the Thakurs. The Thakurs generally do not take food at an Ahir's place, though they can accept *pakka* food from an Ahir. Usually the Ahirs are not invited to the feasts, except when they accompany a Thakur boy's marriage party. The Ahirs are provided with a separate seat, a little distance away from the Thakurs. It is a significant fact that the Thakurs consider the Ahirs as inferior to themselves, whereas the Ahirs think highly of themselves and call themselves Bhagats. If a Thakur touches a *kachcha* pot belonging to an Ahir, the Ahir will not drink water out of it. But a Thakur can take water from an Ahir.

Some time back Vishwanath Singh, Ajodhya Singh, Raghbir Singh, Ahibaran Singh, Jadunath Singh, Murari Singh, Ram Pal Singh and some other Thakurs of Gohana had gone to the nearby village, Purva, to attend a feast in the house of Mata Din Ahir. But they were not offered food so they came back and had to take food at home. The Thakurs have taken this incident to heart and since then they refuse to take food with the Ahirs. Vishwanath Singh (Mukhia) is of the opinion that a Thakur should not take food with low caste people. But he has no objection to taking his meals at the house of an Ahir in another village where he cannot find an opportunity to eat at a Thakur's place.

The Thakurs treat the Kurmis on more or less an equal footing with themselves. The Kurmis are invited by the Thakurs on ceremonial occasions, like *Mundan*, marriage etc. The Thakurs also reciprocate likewise. Janga (an old man) is the only Kurmi living in this village. He says the Kurmis cannot accept *kachcha* food from the Thakurs. But he (Janga) was seriously ill last year, with

no one to look after him and cook his food for him. He was forced to accept the *kachcha* food from the Thakurs. Since then he has started eating *kachcha* food cooked by the Thakurs. But the Kurmis of the other villages do not accept *kachcha* food from the Thakurs. The Thakurs may accept *pakka* food from the Kurmis.

"At marriage", Janga Kurmi said, "Thakurs and Kurmis sit side by side at the feast and there is no caste discrimination on this occasion." But the Thakurs contradicted his statement and said that Kurmis and Thakurs do not sit together in the feasts. The Kurmis are seated at a distance from the Thakurs.

The Lohars participate in both *kachcha* and *pakka* feast at a Thakur's place. Prag Lohar says, they take their food with the Thakurs in one line, without any sense of pollution and can only accept the food from the same person who serves the food to the Thakurs. But Maharaj Singh said that the Thakurs and Lohars do not sit together at a feast but sit at a distance from each other though the men who serve the food are the same.

The Thakurs accept *pakka* food and sweets from the Lohars. They can also accept water from the Lohars but not *kachcha* food. Maharaj Singh said that the Thakurs and Lohars share their *chilam* and *biri* (indigenous cigarette) with each other but not *hookah*.

The Thakurs consider the Kumhars to be clean and can accept water from them. Either of the castes can accept both *chilam* and *hookah* from the other. The Kumhars can accept both *kachcha* and *pakka* food from the Thakurs. The Thakurs used to provide the Kumhars with food for the latter's children after the feast was over. But, as Rampal Singh told us, the Kumhars hesitate to carry the food home for their children now. Instead, they demand the *seedha* (raw food material) from the Thakurs. Therefore, they are now provided with the *seedha* sometimes. The Thakurs do not accept even *pakka* food from the Kumhars.

If there is a *pakka dawat* at a Thakur's place, the Nai and Naain both work at the Thakur's place. The Naain helps in cooking the *poories* (fried *chapati*). The Naain cannot, however, assist at a *kachchi dawat* because the Thakurs can not eat the *kachcha* food (consisting of bread and *dal* touched by the Nai). The Nai serves only water and nothing else at a *kachchi dawat*. In a *pakki dawat* the Nai can serve *poories* and vegetables etc. besides serving the water.

The Pasis accept both *kachcha* and *pakka* food from the Thakurs. The Pasis are the *gorais* (servants) of the Thakurs. So whenever there is a feast at the Thakur's place, they get a share in the food prepared for the feast. The Pasis do not take their food in the same line with the Thakurs. They take it after the Thakurs have finished eating. The Thakurs do not accept any kind of food from the Pasis.

They do not even accept water from them. It is a surprising fact that people of both the castes can smoke from the same *chilam* but they do not accept a *biri* offered by the other caste. In the *katha* of Pasis, the Thakurs accept *prasad* only when it is distributed by a Brahmin.

The Dhobies accept both *kachcha* and *pakka* food from the Thakurs. The Thakurs do not accept food or even water from the Dhobies. Thakurs do not offer their *chilam* to a Dhobi. Vishwanath Singh said if a Dhobi happened to smoke a Thakur's *chilam* in earlier days the latter would break it. A Dhobi cannot offer tobacco and betel to a Thakur. Vishwanath Singh said that these traditional regulations were undergoing a change, and commensality regulations were not as rigid as they were formerly. He cited the instance of Thakurs and Dhobies drinking liquor together. Thakur Ajodhya Singh drinks liquor with Faqiray Dhobi and Kalloo Chamar.

The Thakurs do not even accept water from the Chamars. Thakurs accept goat's milk from the Chamars if milked by Thakurs themselves. They offer water to Chamar not in their pots but in the latter's cupped hands. Chamars are considered the lowest caste and are regarded as untouchables. They are not allowed to touch the utensils or person of a Thakur. The same is true of the Bhaksors.

The Chamars are very dissatisfied with their present humiliating and degrading position in society. They were very often taken on *begar* (forced labour) by the Thakur landlords. Last year Gokaran Chamar was employed in digging a canal, earning about Rs. 2/-, according to the amount of clay he dug. One of the Thakurs, Jaskaran Singh, took him forcibly to his house and made him work there the whole day. In the evening he gave him only 8 annas. There was another similar instance of *begar*. Makhana Chamar was going to his work. Raghbir Singh asked him to cut the *bandh* (dam) at the tank. Makhana was forced to oblige the Thakur. He worked at the tank without getting any money for the work he did. Apart from taking *begar*, the Thakur landlords also take away their (Chamar's) vegetables either forcibly or surreptitiously. Raghbir Singh, Ahibaran Singh and Maharaj Singh very often grab their vegetables. But now-a-days a Chamar resents doing *begar* for any one. He gives a flat refusal, even if money wages are offered. This is because the Chamars now work in the fields and so money does not matter much to them. A Chamar will only accept to work if he is in need of money.

Some of the Chamars are thinking of equality and assimilation with the higher castes. With this end in view they refuse to take food with the Dhobies and Bhaksors. They refuse to lift the *pattals* after the dinner parties of high caste people, and to eat the residual

of food on the *pattals*. They accept only the *parosa* (servings) of fresh food.

Formerly the Chamars, Pasis and Bhaksors were not allowed to draw water from the wells in the village. They had to use the water from the *talab* (tank) even for drinking purposes. But now they freely use the wells along with people of the high castes. A Chamar is allowed to draw water from a Thakur's well now. The Thakurs, however, do not draw water from a well belonging to the Chamars. Today the Chamars have a say in the village *Panchayat* which they did not have some two years ago. There is a desire among the Chamars to lead a respectable life. That is why they refuse to work for the higher castes even when money wages are offered to them.

The lower castes are resentful of the unhelpful attitude of the higher caste people, who always try to humiliate them whenever they get the chance. Lakhai Chamar was once coming to the village with some tanned hides on the carrier of his bicycle. He had avoided passing through the village and had taken a longer route, outside the village. But while near the village, he espied a person who seemed to be a Brahmin. Lakhai rang his cycle bell vigourously to announce himself. The Brahmin let him pass. But when he recognized Lakhai as a Chamar he began shouting at him. Two other high caste passers-by stopped Lakhai. The Brahmin abused Lakhai and hit him on the plea that the hides smelt and had polluted him. After a good beating, Lakhai was asked to be more careful in future and avoid the Brahmin on the streets by taking a different route.

On another occasion Makhana Chamar was severely rebuked for touching a water bucket belonging to the *Sarpanch*, Jadoo Nath Singh. Sukhraj Singh caught Makhana touching the bucket and scolded him. Ahibaran Singh, Gajadhar and Jadoo Nath Singh joined Sukhraj Singh and threatened Makhana with a good beating. He was asked to get the bucket cleaned by a Nai and asked to be more careful in future. After finishing his work there, Makhana got a Nai to clean the bucket and hand it over to the Thakurs.

Chamars generally belong to the labour class. They do all kinds of work besides agriculture, for instance, repairing of houses, cutting wood for fuel, and working as labourers on daily wage. Very few own their own land, as they are usually agricultural labourers, working on other people's land on a daily wage of 8 annas or on Rs. 15/- to Rs. 16/- a month. Murari Singh has employed Gokaran Chamar, Makhana Chamar and Putti Chamar to work on his fields for a monthly payment of Rs. 16/- and one shirt a year, each. Some of the Chamars also cultivate land on *Batai*, giving half of the produce to the owner of the land. Chhota Chamar works on Ahibaran Singh's land on *Batai*. The Thakurs dictate the most ruthless terms to the Chamars who take their fields as share croppers.

There are four families of Chamars who have given up the ordinary work of the Chamars *viz.*, agriculture and have specialized in skinning. This class of Chamars is known as *Gau Sai* Chamars. They skin the dead animals, like cows, buffaloes, bulls, etc., and sell the skin. This work proves to be a very remunerative for them. They can earn about Rs. 300/- to Rs. 400/- a year. The *Gau Sai* Chamars help the police to carry the dead bodies of those who have either committed suicide or had been murdered, to the police station or to Lucknow. They are paid for this work. These *Gau Sai* Chamars are considered lower than the other Chamars in caste status and the Chamars do not marry in their group, though they accept food and water from them.

CLASHES : AHIRS VERSUS THAKURS

Last year an incident took place which shows that the relations between Thakurs and Ahirs are not as close and cordial as they profess them to be. Vishwanath Singh (Mukhia) told us that the Ahirs had called a meeting at *Holi* last year and decided they would not allow the Thakurs to carry the *phag* and sing the *kabirs* in their (Ahirs') *mohalla*. *Phag* is the procession of men who sing songs and play *Holi*. All the castes of the village are represented in the *phag*. *Kabirs* are sung by the Thakurs alone. When the Thakurs came to know about the decision of the Ahirs, they called a meeting of all the Thakurs and determined to carry the *phag* and *kabir* procession at any cost. So, on the *Holi* day the Thakurs took out the procession and went armed with *lathis* and *ballam* (spear). They sang the *kabirs* and marched through the Ahirs' *mohalla*, singing and playing *Holi*. None of the Ahirs came forward to face them or interfere with the procession. The festival was observed very peacefully. This year the Ahirs also took part in all the festivities of *Holi* without any grudge or ill-feeling towards the Thakurs.

Like the other lower castes, the Pasis have been making an attempt to rise in their social status. The attempt was first made in 1939, when Ajodhya Prasad (Pasi) of Girdhar-ka-Purva village, district Bara Banki, wrote a pamphlet. The pamphlet was published on 20th March 1939. It said that the Pasis belonged to a high caste. They were the *Sewak* (servants) of the *Jati* (caste system). They were the trusted confidants of the Thakurs. An appeal was made to the Pasis to cultivate cleanliness, to give up liquor and eating meat, to acquire good habits, to live together in unity, and to educate their children. Moreover, the pamphlet urged the Pasis to try to rise in their social status. They should do no petty and humiliating work because they belonged to a clean caste. They should not accept *kachcha* food from the Thakurs or any other caste, except the Brahmins. As a symbolic expression of their claim to superiority, they were to wear the *janew* (sacred thread).

The pamphlet was circulated in the neighbouring villages to arouse enthusiasm among the Pasis. But this growing enthusiasm among the Pasis was curbed by World War II and the rigorous control of the Zemindari system. In 1949, when the rumour went round that the Zemindari system would be abolished, the matter was taken up again. In the last week of June, 1949, a meeting of the Pasis was called in Itaunja. Ajodhya Prasad (the author of the pamphlet) addressed the meeting. Chheda, Autar Divan, and Kali Din represented Gohana village at the meeting. The pamphlet was widely circulated.

Another meeting was called in July, 1949, in Gohana Kallan of eight or nine neighbouring villages. It was decided in the meeting that the Pasis would not accept *kachcha* food from any of the higher castes, except the Brahmins. Instead, they would accept only uncooked food or *seedha*. Immediately, after the meeting the Pasis started wearing *janew*. The Thakurs were infuriated when they heard of the Pasis' decision to refuse to accept *kachcha* food from them. They forbade the Pasis from grazing their cattle in their (Thakurs') fields and pastures.

In the last week of July, 1949, the Thakurs called the Village *Panchayat* in Gohana Kallan. The Thakurs decided to boycott the Pasis in every possible respect. Furthermore, they forced the other castes to socially boycott the Pasis and refuse to have anything to do with them. As a consequence, the Chamars refused to carry the carcass of the cattle belonging to the Pasis. The Bhaksorin refused to attend on a Pasi woman at child-birth. Similarly, the Nais would not shave a Pasi. The Barahai and Lohar both refused to provide agricultural implements to the Pasis. The Pasis were faced with a complete social boycott by all the castes.

In the second week of September, 1949, the Thakurs stopped all sorts of grants given to the Pasis, and took back their gifts of free land (*Mafi* land) for cultivation from them.

The Pasis reported this to the Police, and called a meeting of all the Pasis. Alam *Darogha* (sub-inspector) from the Mandion *Thana* took two constables with him to prevent any quarrel that might take place at the meeting. The Police inspector went to Vishwanath Singh (Mukhia) to ask the Thakurs to attend the meeting. Vishwanath Singh said that the Pasis would be sitting on *charpois* and *takhat* or cot and the Thakurs would be offended to sit with them. The Thakurs would go only if the sub-inspector undertook the responsibility of making all the Pasis sit on the ground. This the other refused to undertake. Hence none of the Thakurs attended the meeting.

Diwan Pasi (50 years old) addressed the meeting and said, "If the Thakurs do not want to see us wearing the *janew*, let them shut their eyes."

The Pasis had appealed to the Police to restore their land to

them. The Police investigated into the matter and told the Pasis that the land belonged to the Thakurs and the Pasis had no legal claim on the land. This free grant of land depended solely on the pleasure of the Thakurs and hence their confiscating the land was justifiable. The Police could do nothing for the Pasis in this matter.

In the month of *Katik*. (Oct—Nov) the Thakurs forbade the Pasis from irrigating their fields with *Beri*. The Pasis were hard hit, especially the poor ones and they wanted to give in to the Thakurs. Bishambhar and Rameshwar, two poor Pasis of the village, urged the Pasis to end their strife and give in to the Thakurs. The more well-to-do Pasis like Lachchman and Chheda, were adamant and refused to budge and inch. Lootoo (the village *Chowkidar*) acted as a spy, supplying the Thakurs with all the information about this rift among the Pasis. But the Pasis could not for long maintain their position. They had to bow down before the Thakurs. In order to please the Thakurs and win back their favour, the Pasis gave up wearing *janew* in the month of *Poos* (Dec.—Jan). The Thakurs say they did not force the Pasis to give up wearing the *janew*, the Pasis themselves gave it up, realising the odds against them.

The foregoing description of functional relationship between castes indicate the dynamics of the caste structure in the rural setting. In a closed and symbiotic arrangement, cooperation and conflict both are manifest, but conflict does not assume ugly proportion, due to the social brakes applied by the dominant caste or castes. As leadership rests in the dominant castes and an interdependence in economic life becomes a necessity in a self sufficing economic unit like that of a village, the castes run on the rails and the passive cooperation of the numerous castes is equated with rural peace and tranquility. Today, after the abolition of Zemindari and the frequent contacts the villages have with urban and immigrant people, the cloak of solidarity has been pierced and the functional relationships have been undergoing reorientation. It is as a social scientist put it, birth followed by decay and decay by rebirth. A new type of inter-caste relations is shaping in the villages, in which the old attitudes are being slowly transformed, and what is in the offing, is not tension or hostility, but greater concern for group survival, and an evaluative code of inter-caste patterns of behaviour.

There is a general complacency about our village solidarity and integration. We have idolised our village life and find human response in the cry of 'go back to the village'. But we need to know what has been and what the village life is shaping into, before we fall a prey to panegyrics. We need to emphasise microcosmic study of Indian rural life to enable us to form correct perspectives about our rural life. Any action therapy must necessarily be oriented to the 'facts of rural life'.

VILLAGE STUDIES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE¹

M. N. SRINIVAS

I

My aim in this essay is to assess the significance of anthropological studies of Indian village communities for other disciplines such as economics, comparative religion and history, and for the practical tasks of social and agricultural reconstruction. I have in view only the really intensive field-studies conducted by trained anthropologists who use the latest techniques and methods. Judged by this standard a good deal of what passes for field-work does not bear examination. I assume that the reader has a layman's acquaintance with social anthropology, and will therefore refrain from attempting to give him an idea of the way in which the social anthropologist sets about the task of making an intimate and first-hand study of a small community. It is necessary, however, to state that one of the aims of the social anthropologist in selecting a small community is that he wants to obtain an idea of the way in which all the parts of a society hang together. Even if he is studying only a single aspect of a society such as religion or law he tries to view it in relation to the total social system in which all the aspects are found to be constantly interacting. The field-worker records practically everything he sees even when, for instance, his aim is only to make an analysis of the kinship system of the people he is studying. He will try to collect as much information as he can, in the 12-18 months at his disposal, about the other activities of the people such as agriculture, house-building, commercial activities, manners, morals, law and religion. This is partly due to his over-developed sense of curiosity, and partly to his awareness that the various aspects of a society form a closely-woven mesh, and that the particular aspect he is studying might influence and be influenced by every other aspect of social life. The field-worker will have obtained by the time he has completed his study, an intimate and all-round knowledge of the village or tribe he has been with.

It may be argued that, on his own admission, the anthropologist has knowledge of only one tiny village or tribe, and in dealing with vast countries such knowledge cannot be a reliable guide. But then, systematic comparison is considered to be of the essence of the method of social anthropology. For instance, no anthropologist would dare to speak of Indian villages as a whole until a sufficient number of villages in the different cultural areas had been studied. Secondly, an anthropologist takes care to see that his village is either typical of an area, or that it is suitable for the study of a particular theoretical

problem such as the nature of inter-caste-relations, or the effects of irrigation on social and economic institutions, or the relation between religion and the caste structure. And it is necessary to point out that the study of a single village is productive of much more than knowledge about a single village. It is an attempt to answer a general theoretical question. In addition, it provides the anthropologist with some insight into rural social life all over the country. Of course, such insight is not knowledge, and once this distinction is clearly made, even a single village study enables the anthropologist to say a good deal about rural social life in India as a whole.

Intensive field-work experience is of critical importance in the career of an anthropologist. It forms the basis of his comprehension of all other societies, including societies differing greatly from the one of which he has first-hand knowledge. No amount of book-knowledge is a substitute for field-experience.

When the anthropologist reads an economist or political scientist or statistician on the country in which he has done an intensive field-study, he cannot help comparing his experience with the economist's or political scientist's or statistician's. The economist, political scientist and statistician usually deal with large areas, or with a great number of people, and their experience is of quite a different kind from that of the anthropologist. With the former, the collector of primary data is frequently different from the expert who interprets it. The 'macrocosmic' studies of the economist and statistician make such a division of labour inevitable, but it is obvious that there are grave risks in making such a division. Firstly, it requires from the collectors of primary data a high level of integrity, intelligence and training, which they only too often do not possess. This is strikingly clear in an under-developed country such as ours where the government requires the hereditary village officials like the headman and accountant to collect a vast amount of information on a variety of topics. These officials do not as a rule have either the training or the interest to collect accurate information, and besides, in a majority of cases, they have a vested interest in supplying wrong information. For instance, during prevalence of rationing the government was buying up all the surplus grown by peasants at a fixed rate. The surplus was calculated by the village accountant on the basis of the return declared by each peasant and deducting from it the grain necessary to feed the members of his family, servants and old labourers, and seed-grain. It is well known that the accountants winked at low returns, allowed the peasants to include casual guests as members of the family, and so on. The ill-paid accountant was not unwilling to oblige the peasant for a consideration, and in the case of the powerful landlords, he was eager not to incur their wrath.

Even where graduates have been employed to collect answers to

questionnaires devised by some expert in Delhi or beyond, the investigators are able at best to have only a partial grasp of the significance of the questionnaires, as they lack a sound training in social anthropology and sociology.

It is essential that in order to comprehend the significance of the information solicited, the investigators must have a full knowledge of the basic problem that is being investigated, even when it is not a problem in pure theory.

On the other hand, questionnaires can only be compiled after the expert has had some knowledge of the local conditions. The expert frequently lacks such knowledge. These drawbacks could be to some extent remedied where the investigators have been properly trained, and where the expert encourages them to express their opinions freely, but everyone will agree that this is not common.

In the case of anthropological field-studies of village communities, however, the anthropologist both devises the questionnaire as well as collects the answers, and even where he employs an assistant, he is both physically present in the village and also possesses enough local knowledge to exercise close supervision.

II

We have a government which is solicitous of the welfare of the peasantry, and it is aware, as few governments are, of the need for accurate facts on a variety of matters affecting the peasant, such as the extent of sub-division and fragmentation of holdings, the nature of rural credit, the conditions under which the landless labourers work in different parts of the country, and the extent to which under-employment or disguised unemployment prevails in the rural areas. (Two reports, one on rural credit and another on agricultural labour, have already come out.). It is understandable that the government's aim is severely practical in conducting these surveys. It is not however, realized that the successful prosecution of that aim requires what may appear to be a departure from the strictly practical. The various aspects of rural social life are closely integrated with each other, and an analysis of any one aspect of social life may, and usually does, involve an analysis of one or more related aspects and their interactions. Thus, for instance, a survey of rural credit cannot ignore the existence of elaborate marriage and funeral rites, and ideas regarding how they ought to be performed. Statistics regarding cattle make no sense if considered without reference to the agricultural techniques and the peasant's economy, and also, to the ethical and religious beliefs of the people. In short, a consideration of each rural problem as though it was detachable from others and from the total social and cultural matrix, will not lead to the formulation of a proper solution. I repeat that it is entirely understandable that the govern-

ment should want to concern itself only with 'practical research' and that it should aim producing quick results, but what is not understandable is the failure of anthropologists and sociologists to point out that such aims are bound to defeat themselves. This is to some extent due to the utter poverty of university departments which are starved of funds for research which make them accept any conditions, however, unreasonable, imposed by the government.

In short, only the social anthropologist attempts to study the village community as a whole, and his knowledge and approach provide an indispensable background for the proper interpretation of data on any single aspect of rural social life. His approach provides a much-needed corrective to the partial approach of the economist, political scientist and social worker. Again, unlike the other social scientists, he tries hard to keep his value-judgements to himself, and this gives him the necessary sympathy to grasp the rural or tribal situation.

An example will perhaps make clear what I am trying to say. We hear a great deal about India's cattle problem from economists and reformers. We are told that India has the largest cattle population with the smallest milk-yield, that the peasant does not take proper care of his cattle, and that his religious sentiments come in the way of a sensible cattle policy. What light does a study of a single village shed on this matter? The facts which I am about to relate are from the village of Rampura, about 22 miles to the south-east of Mysore City. It is likely that they also hold good of many other villages around Rampura. In this area, the cow is not as important as the buffalo from the point of view of milk. It is true that people prefer cow-milk for drinking, and in fact, infants and patients use nothing else, but buffalo-milk is far more popular for making *ghee*, curd, buttermilk and coffee and tea. Those who sell milk find that it is easier to dilute buffalo-milk than cow-milk. This situation obtains in other parts of India too. Taking the country as a whole, it is very likely that the buffalo is at least as important as the cow as a producer of milk, though not as a draught animal. But it is extremely strange that in discussions on the cattle problem the buffalo is conspicuous by its absence and that this fact has gone uncommented.

In Rampura—and this is true of a considerable part of India as a whole—the bull buffalo is not used for draught purposes. It is, however, a favourite for sacrifice to village goddesses. A cynic might say that people only choose to sacrifice an utterly useless animal which it would have cost fodder to keep. This may be contrasted with the popular view that Hindus refuse to kill off old and useless cattle because of religious sentiments. In this case, the same sentiments require the slaughter of one kind of cattle.

Bullocks are draught animals in Rampura—and in a great part of India. Practically every cultivator in Rampura keeps a pair of bullocks, while only a few keep a cow or buffalo for milk and manure. This is primarily due to the shortage of pasture-land. It is difficult enough to find fodder for bullocks which have to be kept, for no land-owner would like to engage a tenant without bullocks of his own and there is keen competition to obtain land to till. Owning a pair of bullocks is a strong qualification in the struggle to obtain land. But the poverty of the peasant forces him to buy the cheapest bullocks available—in 1948 the lowest price for a pair of small bullocks was about Rs. 250. Small bullocks cost less to feed than big ones. The death of a bullock seriously upsets the peasant's economy, and it may be recalled here that the life of a bullock was precarious before veterinary hospitals became common. An epidemic of rinderpest used to wipe out hundreds of cattle. The peasant is aware that he may be suddenly called upon to replace one or both his bullocks during the middle of the agricultural season. Secondly, ploughs in this area are light, being made of wood, and big bullocks are not needed to draw them. Thirdly, rice is cultivated in small, ridged-up plots, and bullocks must be small enough to turn in them. Big bullocks confer prestige on the owner. One man in Rampura kept two pairs of very big bullocks, magnificent beasts, but he kept them more for show than for draught purposes. The villagers envied him, but also thought him silly, for bullocks are meant for use and not to bring glory to their master. This man was a spendthrift, drank toddy, smoked *bhang*, kept mistresses, and his going in for huge bullocks was of a piece with the rest of his thrift-less life.

Contrary to the impression obtaining among the urban intelligentsia, the peasants take as much care of their cattle as their resources permit. Bullocks are made to work hard during the monsoon months of June–August, and the peasant feels grateful to them. During September and October, when there is not much work to be done in the fields, the peasant gets up sometime after mid-night to hand-feed his sleepy bullocks with green rice shoots. This feeding goes on for a few hours every night. Once I saw a peasant thrusting paddy sheaves into the mouth of a bullock, and I asked him why, when there was acute rice shortage in the cities, he was giving it stuff which could keep human beings alive, and he replied, 'Didn't it help me in sowing and transplanting? Why shouldn't it eat a little of what it helps me to grow?' Gratitude is to be shown not only to human beings, but also to cattle. The peasant's world-view, in some respects or contexts, is not anthropocentric. The bull is after all Basava, the son of Shiva, the animal on which the great god Shiva rides. No bullocks may be yoked to the plough on Monday, for Monday is sacred to Shiva, and Shiva's son should be given rest on that day.

A few rich landlords in Rampura kept a few small cows each, for the sake of manure. There is a great shortage of manure and the rich landlords try to obtain additional manure by keeping cows. A small boy drives them every morning to some pasture-land two miles from the village, and he returns in the evening with the animals. The pasture is poor, but fodder is so scarce that it is worth while to collect what is available. The droppings of the cows are collected in a basket and brought home. Cattle-shed manure is emptied on to the manure-heap. A boy costs only about thirty rupees a year plus food and clothing. Each cow is a mobile Sindri, converting the sparse tufts of poor grass into valuable manure. It may be added here that in Rampura cowdung is not burnt for fuel in spite of the great shortage of fuel. This is due to a rule enforced by the village elders sometime ago—not by the official *panchayat*, however.

It is commonly believed that the peasant's religious attitude to cattle comes in the way of the disposal of useless cattle. Here again, my experience of Rampura makes me sceptical of the general belief, I am not denying that cattle are regarded as in some sense sacred, but I doubt whether the belief is as powerful as it is claimed to be. I have already mentioned that bull-buffaloes are sacrificed to village goddesses. And in the case of the cow, while the peasant does not want to kill the cow or bull himself, he does not seem to mind very much someone else killing it elsewhere. There are, in this area, itinerant Muslim traders who go from village to village exchanging cattle. The trader exchanges one of the calves in his possession for another in the peasant's possession. Peasants say that the trader always gets an animal and a few rupees in exchange for the animal that he parts with. The cattle which are finally with the trader end in a butcher's yard in Hogur or Mysore city.

I hope I have said enough to indicate how complex the cattle problem really is and how some of the opinions current about it are a little less than the whole truth.

III

Over the last hundred years or more, the peasant has been represented as extremely conservative, pig-headed, ignorant and superstitious. And this picture of him seems to have gained greater currency these days as a result of the many organized efforts, official as well as non-official, to change his agriculture and way of life. The anthropologist who has made an intensive study of a village community is unable to subscribe to the current views regarding the peasant.

In a paper entitled, "Technological Change in Over-developed Rural Areas" (*Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 1952,

pp. 261-272), McKim Marriott shows that villagers in Kishen Garhi in Uttar Pradesh have not opposed all change but, on the contrary, have accepted new crops and new techniques of cultivation. What is even more important, he shows that the technology of the peasant is not the simple thing that it is popularly believed to be, but really a complex and inter-related whole, and a change in any single item of it produces repercussions in the entire system. The technological system is closely related to the economic, social and religious systems, and this partly explains the peasant's opposition to change. Change is much more serious and pervasive in small and stable societies where the same people are involved with each other in a number of relationships, than in huge, industrial societies where the different aspects of social life do not form as closely-knit a whole, and where relationships between individuals are specialized and disparate. A desperate shortage characterizes the peasant's economy. He is in need of a few things for sheer survival, and each of these multi-purpose goods is in acute shortage. To give an example : the peasant has several uses for each leaf and twig growing in his area. The cactus is excellent for hedging, it is burnt as fuel when dry, and if it is buried underground when green, makes good manure. The fruit of some varieties of cactus are eaten in some parts of the country. Similarly, agave is good for hedging, its leaves are used to protect new mud walls during the monsoon, and to wall in nurseries, and it provides fibre for rope. Its central shoot is burnt as fuel. Every part of the ubiquitous *babul*, including the two-inch thorns, are put to use. Its twigs are used for hedging, its leaves and pods are eaten by the omnivorous goat, its wood is used as timber and fuel, short lengths of *babul* twigs are used as tooth brushes, its thorns as pins, and its fragrant flowers to adorn women's hair and to make garlands. The popularity of the goat is a measure of the shortage of fodder. Its omnivorousness enables it to survive even in our over-stocked countryside, and its survival makes arboriculture extremely difficult if not impossible.

The peasant uses cowdung as fuel not because he does not know that it is valuable manure, but because he is desperately short of fuel. His plough is wooden and light because his bullocks are small, and he has frequently to grow his livelihood on a few inches of topsoil above hard rock. He spends money at weddings and funerals because if he does not do so he loses face with his relatives, friends and neighbours. It is not fair to hold him responsible for institutions which have existed for many centuries. He can only be blamed for not having the courage to break them, and going against custom is much more difficult in the small, face-to-face and stable village community than in the heterogeneous and huge city. His poverty places him in the obligation of people and this in turn

forces him to behave in such a way that he does not displease others.

The conservatism of the peasant is not without reason. His agricultural techniques are a prized possession embodying as they do the experience of centuries. His social and cultural institutions give him a sense of security and permanence and he is naturally loath to change them. It may be added here that conservatism is not peculiar to the peasantry—nobody likes change especially when he is past his youth. It is the experience of field-workers that in every village there are a few young men who like to alter their traditional ways, but they are in the grip of the authority of the elders. Now-a-days, in many villages, sharp conflict is visible between the elders and youths. The youths have not made much headway in capturing power because respect for elders is strongly emphasised in their tradition, and the institutions of joint family and village *panchayat* tend to protract the dependence, economic and otherwise, of the young men on the old. Thus, changing an item of agricultural technique is not merely a technological matter, but one affecting social relations between father and son, and between elders and youths, and in a sense, the integrity of the entire culture which emphasises respect for the old as a primary value.

His conservatism makes him sceptical of new ways and techniques. He is unconvinced by the success of a variety of rice on a government farm because he knows that his own resources are pitiful while the government's are enormous. Not infrequently is he a jump ahead of the expert for he has already calculated the effect of a new idea or tool on the power-structure in the village. Thus while the expert is elaborating the advantages of a new tool or process, the peasant is thinking, of the power it will place in the hands of the headman or elders. If he then opposes the tool or process, it is not because of his stupidity but because of his intelligence. I have seen with my own eyes how the gift by the government of a superior breed of bull-calf to a village was used by the headman to exercise tyrannical authority over a poor and unfortunate kinsman to whom he gave the calf. Every new tool or technique means changes in social relationships and part of the opposition of villagers to new tools and techniques is due to their perception of the social implications of the innovations. Thus the headman of Rampura wanted bull-dozers and electricity but not a school. Bull-dozers would level his land, electricity would brighten up the home and village and make possible starting small industries, while schools would make labour even scarcer and make the poor people lose the respect they have for the rich. Everyone who has had any experience of our villages knows that in each village there are a few keymen whose position in the structure and whose intelligence will enable them to exploit every

change to their benefit. This fact has to be taken note of while introducing every measure of reform.

IV

A vast body of written literature, sacred as well as secular, is available to the student of Indian social institutions, and the existence of this literature has exercised a decisive influence on the analysis of Indian sociological problems. For instance, references to caste and kin relations in literature have been treated as historical data, and conditions obtaining today have been compared and contrasted with conditions alleged to prevail in historical times. The law books (*Dharma Sutras* and *Dharma Shastras*) have been assumed to refer to laws which were actually in force among the people and it has not been asked whether the laws did not refer to merely what a particular lawyer considered desirable or good. Even for the major lawyers it is not known when exactly they lived, it being not uncommon for one scholar's estimate to differ from another by as much as three centuries. This is especially so in the case of the earlier lawyers. Dr. I. P. Desai writes, "A further difficulty in the development of Hindu law is the lack of agreement among scholars regarding the dates of various works..... There is no agreement regarding the time sequence (of the various authors). Buhler considers Gautama as the earliest Dharmasastrakar and Apastamba as the latest, while Jayaswal reverses the order, considering Apastamba as the earliest and Gautama as the latest Dharmasastrakar". (*Punishment and Penance in Manusmriti*, Journal of the University of Bombay, XV, Part I, July 1946, p. 42). The provenance of a lawyer, and the sanction behind the rules enunciated by him are frequently far from clear if not unknown.

It is pertinent to mention in this connection that there is, among our educated people, an unstated but none-the-less real and deep-seated assumption that what is written is true, and the older a manuscript, the more true its contents. Learning is almost synonymous with poring over palm leaf mss. This bias in favour of literary material is most clearly seen in the syllabuses of Indological studies in our universities. Indology has come to be regarded as knowledge about India's past. Any suggestion that Indology should include the study of tribes and villages which are in existence today would be regarded as too absurd to merit consideration. Caste in the Vedas and in Manu ought to be studied but caste as a powerful force in modern Indian life ought not to be. Such a separation between the past and present is not healthy.

The observation of social behaviour is everywhere a difficult undertaking and, in certain respects, observing one's own society is

far more difficult than observing an alien society. In the case of Indians, there is the additional difficulty that ideas which are carried over from literary material, and from the caste to which one belongs by birth, vitiate the observation of field-behaviour. An example of such a failure to understanding the factual situation is provided by the way in which the idea of *varna* has vitiated the understanding of caste. I have discussed this point elsewhere (*A. R. Wadia, Essays in Philosophy Presented in his Honour*, Bangalore, 1954, pp. 357-364), but I will briefly summarise it here. According to the *varna* scheme, there are only four castes and a few other groups, while as a matter of actual fact there are, in each linguistic area, several hundred castes, each of which is a homogeneous group, with a common culture, with a common occupation or occupations, practising endogamy and commensality. The castes of a local area form a hierarchy. There are several features of this hierarchy which run counter to the hierarchy as it is conceptualised in the idea of *varna*. Firstly, in the *varna* scheme, there are only four all-India castes each of which occupies a definite and immutable place, while, in caste at the existential level, the only definite thing is that all the local castes form a hierarchy. Everything else is far from certain. For one thing, the hierarchy is characterised by uncertainty, especially in the middle region which spans an enormous structural gulf. Each caste tries to argue that it occupies a higher place than the one allotted to it by its neighbours. This arguability has an important function because it makes possible mobility, and castes are mobile over a period of time. There is occasional leap-frogging inside the system, a caste jumping over its neighbours to achieve a high position. Another important point is that the hierarchy is local, varying from one small local area to another, if not from one village to another. Two groups bearing the same name and living in the same linguistic region often occupy different positions in their respective local hierarchies and differ from each other in some customs and rites. The Kolis of Gujarat are a case in point.

It is clear that the idea of *varna* is far too rigid and simple to cover the immensely complex facts of caste. But the idea of *varna* helps to make the facts of caste in one region intelligible all over India by providing a conceptual frame that is simple, clear-cut, stable, and which, it is imagined, holds good everywhere. And it helps mobility too, for ambitious castes find it less difficult to take on high-sounding Sanskritic names with the name of one of the *varnas* as a suffix, than to take on the name of a local higher caste. But all this is lost sight of because *varna* is treated as describing caste accurately and fully. But this would not have happened if we Indians had not taken it for granted that the idea of *varna*, derived from literary material, adequately explained the facts of the caste system. The only cure

for this literary bias lies in doing field-research. The field-worker, confronted by the bewildering variety and complexity of facts as they actually are, is forced to relate what he sees to what he has assumed it to be, and the lack of correspondence between the two, results in his attempting to reassess the written material.

V

In every part of India only a few castes at the top enjoyed a literary tradition while the bulk of the people did not. Under British rule the top castes supplied the intelligentsia which acted as the link between the new masters and the bulk of the people. And the new intelligentsia saw the social reality through the written literature, regarding the deviations from the latter as aberrations. This group also perpetrated an upper-caste view of the Hindu social system on the new masters and through them, the outside world. Conditions prevalent among the upper castes were generalized to include all Hindus. For instance, women are treated much more severely among the higher castes than among the lower, but this distinction was ignored by the early reformers. They talked about the plight of the Hindu widow, the absence of divorce, the harshness of the sex code towards her and so on, but on all these matters the institutions of the lower differ in important respects from those of the higher castes. The point I am trying to make is that the observation of Hindu social life has been, and still is, vitiated by the book-view and the upper-caste-view. A sociological study of Indian sociologists would yield interesting results.

An emphasis on religious behaviour as such, as distinguished from what is written in the religious books and the opinions of the upper castes, would have provided us with a view of Hinduism substantially different from that of the philosophers, Sanskritists and reformers. I shall try to explain what I mean by an example. In the summer of 1948, I went along with the elders of Rampura village to the temple of the deity Basava to watch them consult the deity about rain. The priest performed *puja*, chanting *mantras* in Sanskrit, and then the elders began to ask the deity to let them know whether it was going to rain or not in the next few days. I was expecting them to behave as I have seen devotees behave in the temples of the upper castes, *viz.*, stand with bowed head and folded palms, shut eyes, and utter words showing great respect for, and fear of, and dependence upon, the deity. I was completely taken aback to find them using words which they used to an equal, and a somewhat unreasonable equal at that. They became angry, shouted at the deity, taunted him, and went so far as to say that they considered even the government more worthy of confidence than him.

And they were deadly serious all the time. Nothing could have been further from an urban Hindu's ideas of what the proper relationship was between man and god.

It is frequently said by apologists and reformers that Hinduism is not a proselytizing religion like Christianity and Islam. This again is not strictly true. Besides the Buddhists and Jains, the Lingayats, who began as a militant reformist sect in the South in the twelfth century, A.D., secured converts from all the castes from the Brahmin to the Untouchable in the early days of their history. The Lingayats are a well-organized sect, and they have monasteries scattered all over the Karnatak. In southern Mysore, for instance, the monasteries have a following not only among Lingayats but among a number of middle-range non-Brahminical castes with whom they are in continuous contact, and over whose life they exercise some kind of direction. The head of each monastery collects a levy from each of his followers through a hierarchy of agents. It is important to note that this is not confined to the Lingayats though they are the best-organized of the sects. The Brahmin followers of the great theologian and reformer, Sri Ramanujacharya, have a monastery at Melkote, about 26 miles from Mysore City, and the monastery has a following among the people in the surrounding towns and villages. Thus, both Brahmin and non-Brahmin sects have deeply influenced the people at large through organizations which have existed for hundreds of years. Still one frequently reads in books on Hindu religion and philosophy that Hinduism is unique in that it is not a proselytising religion. It is true that Hindus do not try to convert Christians or Muslims, but in a sense conversion is going on all the time within Hinduism. The lower castes and tribal people have been undergoing Sanskritization all the time, and sects, Brahminical and non-Brahminical, and Vaishnavite and Shaivite, have actively sought converts. Persecution for religious views and practices has not been unknown.

VI

The studies of village communities which are currently being carried out in the different parts of the country provide the future historian with a vast body of facts about rural social life, facts collected not by travellers in a hurry, but by men who are trained to observe keenly and accurately. These studies constitute therefore valuable contributions to the social, political, economic and religious history of our country. Their value is further enhanced when it is realized that the changes which are being ushered in Independent and Plan-conscious India herald a complete revolution in our social life. It is true that in historic times India has been subject to invasions by diverse peoples including the Mughals and British, and that British

rule inaugurated changes the fulfilment of which we are observing now, but the break with the past was never as complete and thorough-going as it is today. We have, at the most, another ten years in which to record facts about a type of society which is changing fundamentally and with great rapidity.

Historians have stated that a knowledge of the past is helpful in the understanding of the present if not in forecasting the future. It is not, however, realised that a thorough understanding of the present frequently sheds light on the past. To put it in other words the intimate knowledge which results from the intensive field-survey of extant social institutions does enable us to interpret better, data about past social institutions. Historical data are neither as accurate nor as rich and detailed as the data collected by field-anthropologists, and the study of certain existing processes increases our understanding of similar processes in the past. It is necessary to add here that great caution has to be exercised in such a task, for otherwise history will be twisted out of all recognition. But once the need for extreme caution is recognised, there is no doubt that our knowledge of the working of historical processes will be enhanced by this method. For instance, the study of the extant institution of feud in certain African societies has enabled anthropologists to conclude that the classical view of the feud as it obtained among the ancient Anglo-Saxons perhaps needs to be changed in important respects. (See M. Gluckman's essay on Political Institutions in *The Institutions of Primitive Society*, Edited by E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Oxford, 1954, pp. 74-75). It is probable that the study of factions as it obtains in an Indian village today will shed light on local political history.

Enough has been said, I hope, to indicate the importance of the intensive study of villages which are at present being made in different parts of India. To the anthropologist, the villages are invaluable observation—centres where he can study in detail social processes and problems to be found occurring in great parts of India, if not in a great part of the world. An anthropologist goes to live in a village for a year or even two not because he wants to collect information about curious and dying customs and beliefs, but to study a theoretical sociological problem, and his most important aim is to contribute to the growing body of theoretical knowledge about the nature of human societies. The success of welfare work is considerably helped, indirectly, by the growth of this theoretical knowledge. The universities are the proper organisations to conduct this research, and the government can help by giving money to the establishment of teaching and research posts in social anthropology and sociology. Too much stress on utilitarian research will defeat itself, and will further lower intellectual standards.

I may now mention a few of the problems that are either being

studied, or have just been studied, by anthropologists in the last ten years. One anthropologist is making a study of the effects of the introduction of irrigation, and commercial crops, on what was formerly a predominantly 'dry' village. A sugar factory was put up in this area in the Thirties, and the village in question grows some sugarcane for the factory. A study of this village should also help to throw some light on the effects of the introduction of a cash economy and urbanization on rural social institutions. Another anthropologist has made a study of the effects of peasant social institutions on peasant economy in Orissa. A third has made a study of the impact of urbanization and Westernization on inter-caste relations in a Tanjore village. One of the students in the M. S. University, Baroda, is about to begin the study of a multi-caste village in Gujarat in which genealogical records, going back to about two hundred years at least, are available for each of the principal castes. Here the aim is to study the effects, if any, of the presence of a written or historical tradition on the institutions and beliefs of a peasant community. My own aim in making a study of Rampura was to get a detailed description of the way in which each of the nineteen caste groups behaved towards the others. I must confess I was a bit tired of reading about caste in general, and it may come as a surprise to some to know that in spite of the great interest in the institution of caste, no one had seen fit to go and live in a multi-caste village and record in detail the inter-actions between the various castes. I also wanted to find out the relation which the caste system bore to the pattern of land-ownership in the village. My study has convinced me of the enormous value of studying all Indian sociological problems in single villages. I do not say all sociological problems can be studied in the village, but only many of the most important ones.

METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH*

MAX RALLIS

Applied Social Science has a great deal of charm to the researcher, because it deals with life processes. Added to this is the intellectual excitement, to quote a critic, to be at the developmental frontiers of the field. Before entering the practical scene for observation of human life processes, the social scientist concerns himself with theoretical thoughts, conceptualization, and constructs. Perhaps as a link between theory and empiricism enters methodology. I will try to expose some of the methodological aspects in Social Science research today.

It is, evidently, taken for granted, that the method of social science is considered scientific method. The researcher who studies the social world and human relationships adheres to the same principles of systematic procedures as the scientist who examines the physical or organic world and their inter-relationships. The researcher works with the assumption that phenomena of the social world can be discerned in configurations, the regularities of which permit prediction within certain limits of error. Common sense, sound logic and level of proof are the researcher's guiding lines. He has open to him three alternative avenues of approach to attack his problems : (1) The inductive method, (2) The deductive method and (3) A combination of inductive and deductive investigative procedures.

At times, it is, obviously, no simple matter to draw a clear distinction between borderline cases. The attempt of integration of both inductive and deductive methods, that is building a bridge from real life observation to theoretical calculations and *vice versa*, is to some degree ever prevalent in scientific endeavour. In applied social sciences, the tendency has been during the last decades to stress the inductive method, chiefly so in cultural anthropology, social psychology, sociology and agricultural economics ; the scales might be considered balanced in the field of economics, whereas history and political science disciplines tended towards the deductive method. He is a fortunate researcher who succeeds in continuous cross-fertilization from inductive to deductive method and the other way around.

Social science methodology deals, of course, mainly with the applicability of techniques of investigation in the empirical sense. Those concerned with theoretical and analytical problems ask the big question *what?* *What* is going on ? *What* are the interac-

* The author feels alone responsible for all statements made in this paper, although he has frequently borrowed ideas and concepts of his teachers and colleagues especially from Columbia and Cornell Universities.

tions ? *What* are the relationships ? *What* are the patterns according to which individuals or groups of individuals behave ? *What* are the motivations, attitudes, prejudices which make people or institutions adopt one course of action and not another one ? Methodologists, on the other hand, ask the question *how* ? *How* do I find out what is happening ? *How* do I ascertain interactions ? *How* the relationships ? *How* do I go about determining the patterns according to which individuals or groups of individuals behave ? *How* do I find out the motivations, attitudes and prejudices which make people or institutions adopt one course of action and not another one ? Methodologists are the theoreticians to the practitioner of empirical research. It is their function to provide him with appropriate and adequately tested tools for investigation. Social practitioners are professionals conducting research utilized by the community at large and by specific organizations within the community. In the USA, as well as in India and Great Britain, many Government departments have been among the largest clients of the social research scientist to whom they turned not for advise on policy matters, but for knowledgeable insights to be taken into consideration for policy decisions. In the USA, industry, business and trade-unions are steady clients of social researchers.

Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize the presently inherent limitations of social science, before discussing some of its methodological aspects. This is a recently evolved science and as such it has to struggle for recognition in many quarters of the old-fashioned and traditional-minded academic and official world. Like the medical profession which only 150 years back had a tough going in the most liberal of the Western countries, social science requires time to assert itself in its own right in all important places. Born out of the needs of daily life processes, its sunny and its shady sides, its tensions and conflicts, its simplicities and complexities, social science research aims at full utilization of its findings, which adequately brought into play will alone validate research efforts. The fact that social science research makes to a great extent use of social statistics and mathematics of probability with which large population groups are unfamiliar or about which they entertain misleading ideas, has added another barrier to its general recognition. As an empirical search for facts it is based on the interplay of trial and error experiences which occasionally lead to failures which are likely to create undue discredit when misrepresented or dramatized. Further, it is not an unfrequent occurrence that during an upswing phase of its activities, scientific curiosity, zeal and devotion, make the scientist to set his sights too high and, then, to fall short of his target ; such situations are especially probable to shape out, when the store of adequate and well-tested instruments of research techniques is poorly filled.

Now we can pose the question about the need for methodology. So far social science has developed without systematically standardized procedures and it could be argued that regimentation of the disciplines through imposition of rules and normalized practices would only complicate life or that the time is not yet ripe for introducing well defined techniques. Perhaps the timing is ill chosen? Regardless, however, progress is going on and the growing proportions of social science research make methodological thought imperative. For the sake of an illustration, a summary of the research-in-progress reported during the 1954 meetings of the American Association for Public Opinion Research are given.¹ It should be kept in mind that not all research is reported at such occasions and that only a minority of American social scientists are members of this organization which by the way counts about 2000 members. 14 research programmes are reported in the field of international research. These are more specifically two projects dealing with the analysis of communications content, seven projects dealing with opinion research and five with communications systems. 24 projects deal with Opinion research in the U.S.; 11 projects with communications research; 13 with methodological problems; and six with miscellaneous problems. Although 68 projects are reported at the mentioned meeting of one society, we can roughly estimate a two years' duration per project which is not a very essential point because projects begin and end continuously. Among the methodological projects reported, eight deal with research on opinion formation, flow of opinion and opinion change and five with research on opinion and attitude measurement.

A study made by Bernard Berlson for the Ford Foundation indicated that in the USA alone over ten million dollars, something of the order of 5 crores of rupees are yearly reported to be expended for purposes of social science research.² Hence, these data convey a notion about the importance of social science research and about its fast growth. Twenty years ago social science had been an orphan child, few paid attention to it, a few thousand dollars yearly for a research project sounded much more than a hundred thousand dollars sound to-day. Pioneers did the spade work. The result of their efforts snowballed. Today's amount of activities leaves no doubt in that respect.

Here then, the need for social science methodology becomes apparent. Like in all arts, individual artists utilize their skills to build their works. Then come the critics and historians who write about the achievements of the painter, the architect, the politician and all the other craftsmen and, thus, establish schools of arts and schools of thoughts and a basis for the training in those skills of future generations and their experts. More than in any other branch of activities, it seems to me, the social scientist is his own critic and

historian. The nature of social science, the frequent altruistic guiding philosophy of the social scientist, the urgent requirements of the daily life processes do not permit him to wait for a body of qualified critics and historians to come to his assistance. The rapidity of the development of social science imposes the task on its own carriers to scrutinize its work. The goals of adequate methodology call for reproducibility of research to enable control and to assure reliability, for comparability of research to relate findings from various projects, and for better teaching techniques with the aim to specify the criteria by which the social scientist may determine the types of field conditions and types of research problems that are most suitable to be investigated by the different techniques of data-gathering currently in use in social science studies.

Let us consider, for instance, the research problem of the comparative study of communications systems. I quote from a draft of a program and a project which emanated a few years ago from one of the institutes attached to Columbia University. "Each country is likely to take its own communications systems for granted. A Scandinavian would not think of having the radio owned by private business interests, just as we would not think of schools operated in that way. For most countries, even in Western Europe, newspapers emphasize the dissemination of views rather than information. In Islamic countries, however, it is not as obvious as with us that each person should have an opinion on public affairs.

Social scientists have studied such contrasts in many fields. In Western Europe, as a matter of course, labour movements form permanent affiliations with political parties; in the United States political independence is a basic tenet of trade union activities. The foreign policy expert knows that he would make grave mistakes in his handling of European affairs if he did not take such differences into account.

Similar variations appear in the communications behaviour in different countries. In European villages and small towns the teacher belongs to the top leadership in the community. In the United States this is undoubtedly not the case. A European country which wanted to influence opinion in American communities would certainly be disappointed if it centered its efforts upon gaining the support of the local teachers. It is quite likely that differences in the social context of communications systems in various countries are of great practical importance for the conduct of international propaganda.

Starting from such considerations, ideas can be developed toward a "comparative sociology of communications systems."

What would such a program of research and analysis consist of? Here is a listing of the main working hypotheses established by the theorist in a deductive way: The need for more quantitative data

on the distribution of communication facilities, the relation between social structure and accessibility of mass media, the effects of restricted accessibility as existing in various countries, the general attitudes which people have toward the media, differences in expectations and tastes as between audiences in various countries, determination of the groups in a population which are concerned with the performance of mass media, relating the communications structure of a country to other features of its social system, the impact of the oral tradition, the importance of opinion leadership, and more. How to get about solving the problems thus raised, becomes partly a methodological question.

Permit a diversion. We all know about skilled craftsmen who do a splendid job in their crafts; take a silversmith, or a shoemaker, or many a painter. If you ask him how he does it, you will frequently find that he is not sufficiently articulate to explain it to you. He knows it. His knowledge is acquired but not learned to an extent where he is enabled to pass it on in abstract way. And these craftsmen are chiefly dealing with inorganic matters and objects, whereas the social scientist studies mainly life processes which are likely to change from situation to situation, from time period to time period and which are influenced by a given environment and special conditions prevailing, which make for a situational setting. Methodology, in this sense, attempts to ascertain, how can it be done? How can we apply skills used in social science research on a broad basis? How can we establish such scientific procedures as to allow for the largest possible number of researches to perform an optimum work? It is fully realized that the systematic empirical branch of social sciences has a relatively short history and its consolidation with the theoretical branch which looks back at its history in terms of centuries frequently lacks resoluteness. In a memorandum on professional training in social research three Columbia University professors state that: "The continued separation of the two is an all too familiar fact. Some theorists, seeking to develop some of the critical problems in the discipline, have little first-hand acquaintance with the current potentialities of empirical research. And too many of those engaged in empirical research have not been trained to utilize a theoretical framework in their inquiries."³ One aspect of methodology, it is anticipated, can greatly assist in filling this gap between theoretical workers and researchers in the fields of social science. At the same time, methodological concern pries into both branches of the science and helps building a closer contact between theoretical thought and empirical findings.

Among the methodological projects listed above, we find a Study of Opinion and Intensity Changes aiming at developing models of public opinion and experimenting at changing opinion; the method,

as the authors call it, and which I would prefer to designate as techniques used, are interviews and class room self-administered questionnaires as well as controlled experiments with small samples; as special features of this project the authors indicate that they have been able to change 25% of opinions by interjecting a single sentence argument and that this high leverage may permit more significant measurements of changes in opinion according to the different arguments used. The distinction which I try to draw between method and technique is one of terminology with the purpose to do justice to diversified procedures of inquiry in the various fields. It seems appropriate to talk about the historical method which is chiefly based on documentary research. Most techniques of observation are, however, used by all disciplines whenever possible and there is a great deal of overlapping in the sense that the same technique might be frequently applied in most fields of social science. Russel L. Ackoff writes in his very important work : "The Design of Social Research" in terms of degree of generalization as a distinctive mark between method and technique.⁴ There is concurrence in view and reference is, therefore, made to technique when speaking about a procedure in systematic research. Stanley Paine's Study of Opinion Changes shows, in the few lines available and just quoted, great concern with both theory and applied research.

In this connection, it seems timely to consider the various component factors that enter decisively into the process of a social science research project. These are (1) the research topic or subject matter or assignment, (2) the situational and cultural setting, time element involved, season, and locality of research with its specific environmental features, (3) the research personnel at hand, their calibre, training and motivation, (4) the techniques employed, (5) the budget at its disposal, size of staff, length of preparatory work, etc., and (6) the outlook of the sponsors of the research, the pressure directly or indirectly deriving from them. The nature of these variables is likely to differ from research project to research project and accordingly each field study is likely to alter in respective terms. At times, one component factor will be of greater importance than another. There is no doubt that the lack of consistency is at the expence of precision. But we know that dealing with human beings and with life processes, we strive at relative figures and scientific estimates and not at mathematical precision.

Still, the requirement for uniformity of techniques applied is paramount, because it alone will enable a control of measurements taken, and the chance for reproducing the measurements, tests, or observations. Adequate research administration should be capable to handle or at least to ascertain such biases as could be introduced by the subject matter of research, the cultural setting, the research

personnel involved and the eventual pressures exerted by the sponsors. There is no doubt, in my mind, that more attention than is given now, will be paid in the future to these factors. In the meantime, however, the techniques or instruments of research seem for good reason to attract special scrutiny. For the sake of illustration, I like to discuss the interview technique, because it is most common to all disciplines and because it is applied on a large scale.

What is an interview? An interview is an interaction process taking place between interviewer asking questions, it is producing stimuli, and an interviewee responding to these. When does an interview become an instrument of social science? It is considered an instrument of social science, when it is part of a systematic research plan. The two main categories of interviews are contextual or so-called qualitative and structural interview. Contextual interviews comprehend clinical and psychoanalytical interviews, depth interview which might be unstructured or semi-structured, life histories which at times might be based only on interview material and the same goes for case studies. The main characteristic of contextual interviews is the flexibility of questions which are framed according to the given context and setting by the interviewer as he considers appropriate. In the structured interview, to the contrary, the questions are non-flexible, the interviewer is instructed to adhere to given question wording and in most cases to a prescribed question sequence as well.

After these preliminary classifications let us see how an interview fits into a systematic research procedure, as it is the basic part of the interview technique which is chiefly applied either by way of a questionnaire or an interview guide. The questionnaire can be administered either orally or in writing.

Assuming that the interview technique is the proper instrument to be used to solve a given assignment and that no other technique such as documentary research, participant observation, controlled experiments, psychometric or sociometric tests should be substituted, a decision will be cast between the employment of contextual or structured interview, as this appears to be a frequently used instrument. Then the problem of the questionnaire design arises. This is not as simple as it might first appear. Stanley Payne makes in his book "The Art of Asking Questions" a reference to the effect that research directors of to-day are likely to faint if they would confront the primitive and inadequate sorts of questions asked ten years ago.⁵ This indicates to what extent questionnaire formulation has evolved in one decade. A determination of the kind of information required is needed; the type of the questionnaire form is to be ascertained, whether for mail or group, for personal or anonymous administration. According to the type, the design will vary. The tentative formulation of a questionnaire will be attested on trial-

interviews, then a good handful of pre-tests will follow which will permit proper adjustment in question wordings and sequence of questions. Finally, an interview guide will be prepared to provide the interviewers with proper instructions and definitions. In the process of the design special attention is paid in terms of pitfalls to be avoided by carelessly formulated questions and in terms of types of responses desired. It is necessary to arrive at a proper decision for including an adequate number of questions for a given topic, for required sub-questions and probes, for determination whether the respondents command the factual knowledge and eventual inclusion of filter questions, for checking possible bias inherent in questions, for eliminating questions of personal nature which are likely to be resisted and for resolving use of direct or indirect questions. As to types of responses required, the question wording will stimulate open-ended or so-called free-answer replies, yes-no or agree-disagree responses, calibrated and multiple choice or so-called 'cafeteria answers'.

There is some overlapping simply due to the complexity of the technique at the present stage. Among illiterate people, for example, story-type questions seem frequently to show comparatively excellent results. The kind of replies which a story-type formulation can stimulate may be manifold. It can be either a "yes-no" or an open-ended reply, or agree-disagree or a multiple choice reply. In terms of content, we encounter in general three types of questions which are either factual questions or opinion questions or attitudinal questions. These three types are exclusive, the one of the other. At times we are likely to face some difficulty in distinguishing attitudinal from opinion questions in border-line cases. What response expresses an opinion and what response expresses an attitude, can be best evaluated by the analyst in the light of the context of the question within the questionnaire-frame and in the light of the interview inter-action when the stimulus had been produced. In general, however, the principal concern in questionnaire design focusses on the formulation of questions in a way to be fully comprehended by the respondents and on the exclusion of any kind of hidden influence inherent in the question which could bias the response.

The questionnaire design is obviously only part of the technique. Another part is the sampling procedure, the third is the actual interview, and the fourth the analysis of the data. Like an engine of a car that will fail unless all its major parts are well designed and their action synchronized, the best questionnaire design is of no great value for a given research unless sampling, interviewing and analysis meet the required standard of performance.

There has been sufficient writing in India on sampling for allowing me to skirt this issue. But it is again emphasized that the performance of the best interviewers with the best questionnaire will produce

meager findings in terms of its validity unless the sampling on which the study is based, is adequate.

On interviewer selection and on criteria which make for good interviewers three prerequisites can be listed. They are (1) legible handwriting, (2) capability to establish rapport and (3) capability to talk respondent's "language", in the literal sense. Not only knowledge of the dialect but knowledge of the regional slang as well is desirable. Let me again stress the fact that the best interviewer who has a way to conduct the best interviews will be no asset to a research project unless his handwriting is legible. Without attempting to present an exhaustive list or to imply its applicability to all tasks and conditions, I would like to name the following six essential criteria which are likely to typify an adequate interviewer. These are : (1) Capability to ascertain whether or not a question has been fully replied to, (2) Capability to ascertain evasions and/or untrue responses, (3) Capability to lead back to the questions asked in cases when interview drifted into a discussion, (4) Capability to reply satisfactorily to respondent's unexpected and delicate questions, (5) Capability to recognize significant comments and remarks, and (6) Capability to remain patient and comprehensive under all conditions. In addition, two conditions will facilitate the interviewer's performance. One is, of course, the full command of the questionnaire to be handled. The second is the tendency to appear inconspicuous. Even if these remarks may sound matter-of-fact and hardly worthwhile mentioning, long experience has shown that it is not so. Again and again it occurs that interviewers who for one reason or another exhibit conspicuous features fall out in their performance. It appears that a latent correlation exists between an inconspicuous and a successful interviewer.

A few words on the most sensitive moment in the interview process, namely on the establishing of rapport between interviewer and respondent. Each interview situation is likely to be different from the next. The first contact occurs frequently in a completely unanticipated fashion, is completely unstructured and all initial actions and reactions are highly flexible. It is the interviewer and the personality of the given respondent as well as to the circumstances and the environment of a given situational setting that influence and channel rapport building. As complex as this process might look certain elements in the rapport building can be discerned. Given conditions prevail to a greater or smaller degree of intensity in all or most of the rapport situations and can be studied. Briefly, rapport can be defined as an initial condition in an interaction process determined by the actors. The inherent elements of a rapport building process can be described as : understanding of mutual communication system, congruence of frames of references, acceptance of respective

roles, and trust, confidence and minimal reticence. The most important conditions that influence the rapport building process can be seen in: intimacy of closeness of relations, degree of affect, friendliness, specificity of roles, authority; auspices, kind of definition of situation and motivation.

Whereas interview form and sampling are entirely predetermined and fixed, we have seen that the interviewing conducted by several interviewers with many respondents changes from interaction situation to interaction situation. It cannot be repeated often enough that proper understanding of sampling procedures and a full command of the questionnaire, content-wise and in terms of the different types of questions, not only facilitate the interviewer's field tasks but increase as well his chances for better performance. Assuming that the first three phases of a research project employing the interview technique;—design of the study and questionnaire formulation, sampling and field work,—have been successfully completed, the analyst moves in to order and to interpret the data collected. He will adhere to the principles of classification of unstructured materials according to the working hypotheses of his study design and he will be in the position to codify his structured data. In the first instance, he content-analyzes the data according to the inductive procedure; in the second instance, he classifies the data and orders them according to preselected analytic categories or topics. Recently this process has been designated as coding, in the sense that the data are fitted to a set of categories or a code. At present, attempts are made, among others, to test how these analyses vary? How the generalizations that grow out of these two kinds of data-collecting procedures compare? To what extent is there overlap between the categories arrived at inductively and those arrived at deductively? Where there is overlap, what is the agreement or divergence in the generalizations about them? What is the nature of the evidence supporting these generalizations, arrived at by different techniques of analysis and/or data-gathering.

Summing up, the interview technique within the framework of a research project allows reproducibility of findings and statistical tests of the data gathered, when the requirements for systematic research, i.e., adequate design, sampling interviewing and analysis are met.

But the interview technique is only one of the various techniques used in social science and it has been taken out of context for the sake of exposition. Other methodological aspects are perhaps less studied but of no less importance.

An essential question confronting the social scientist early in his research is the decision about how much intensive and exhaustive cultural description and understanding is required for an adequate design of his investigation. It is possible that the answer to this

question may depend upon such circumstantial aspects as the character of the culture or the special traits of the researcher; How familiar is he with the cultural milieu and similar cultural milieu? How familiar is he with the language? How quickly can he learn it? Still leaving aside these circumstantial matters and acknowledging the fact that the more penetrating is one's knowledge of a culture, the more acute a research design is likely to be, it nevertheless remains feasible to present this problem in meaningful methodological terms. How exhaustive a cultural description is essential for the adequate design of a study such as the one, where the problem of research is specified in advance?

Another essential methodological aspect refers to differences in data-gathering procedures. Upon certain occasions and for certain research process, the fieldworker defines his data-collecting task as unselectively as possible. In interviews with subjects and informants, he uses what he sees as a point of departure for questioning and probing as to the meaning, in this culture, of the occurrences, events or verbal cues which come to him by virtue of his presence in the community. He aims to secure from respondents and informants—and even from introspection about his own experiences—as full a description as available on the on-going social process, trying to get as rich and full a background as possible for understanding these cultural processes. He tries to avoid, insofar as humanly possible, personal judgement as to the relevance or irrelevance of the information available to him.

Upon other occasions, and for other research purposes, the field worker sets his data-collecting task in a highly selective way. He enters the scene of investigations armed with a specified set of topics to examine, usually the analytic constructs of his study design. His aim is to secure only as much data as is necessary to permit him to generalize about these constructs or these topics. He defines some data, therefore, as relevant and others as irrelevant. Insofar as is humanly possible, he tries to collect only the former type of data. The methodological implication lies in the comparison of the kinds of generalizations which grow out of the analysis of these two kinds of data-gathering procedures.

A further methodological aspect is the flexibility of a research question and its influence on level of proof. In some situations, and for some research topics, the fieldworker varies his research questions as the project progresses and his data indicate new, unanticipated needs. This may be true not only for the project as a whole, but for any given investigation of a single situation, a single informant, a group, a subject-matter, a system, or an institution. As a result, the focus of interest at any phase of the investigation may be quite different from the focus of interest at the end of it. It is a need, in this kind of data-collecting procedure, that the field-man act simul-

taneously as data-gatherer and analyst. He evaluates his data and acts accordingly either on the spot (in a given interview situation or observation task) or during the total period of the field work. That is, he makes tentative interim analysis of his data frequently while he is in the field, and if such analysis leads him to decide that his problem should be redefined, he will do so immediately.

This procedure, however, makes it almost impossible to order all informants with respect to the same variable. Certain topics may be considered inappropriate for some subjects, or not suitable to pursue in some situations, or may be discarded from the later specification of the research design. Thus, such flexibility has a hidden implication for the level of proof for any generalization, and for the justification of extrapolating to any larger population group than the sample actually covered. In such a case, the researcher relies on judicial evidence rather than the measurable evidence of statistical proof—this evidence is evaluated according to the reasonableness of his statements and the internal consistency of his story.

In other cases, the field worker sacrifices such flexibility in the data-gathering phase of the research in order to be able to place a large number of respondents with respect of the same variable. This is usually done by the survey technique, which relies on a standardized stimulus to elicit the response which permits the respondent to be ordered. The data secured by such techniques may be handled statistically, and such statistical manipulation provides, in the analysis phase, the flexibility which is absent in the data-collecting phase, for the analyst can take advantage of the fact that all respondents are measured with regard to the same variable.

Such a technique, however, requires a problem to be phrased with a high degree of specificity in advance of the principal data-gathering phase. It separates the data-collecting operation from the analytic operation. It assumes that it is possible to order all informants equally reliably with respect to the same variable. It further assumes that the characteristics relevant to the sample are known. Then it provides in the case that these assumptions are validated a formal and measurable level of proof.

Still another methodological aspect deals with the role of the investigator. In some research tasks the field-worker operates as a passive observer, recording an activity or an event or a response to a stimulus which is a customary part of the normal environment of the subject under investigation. The researcher tries to secure his data "in the normal course of events". To this end, some field-workers go as far as to dissimulate their research interests; others try to involve themselves in situations in such a way that their particular research instrument is not apparent to the subjects, so

that the focus of interaction is on persons or events other than the investigator as researcher.

For other research tasks, the fieldworker operates as an active and essential stimulus to the interaction. He secures his data by active questioning or manipulation of stimuli designed to elicit data. Rather than taking the role of the passive recorder, the fieldworker takes the role of an investigator.

Methodological research attempts to evaluate the appropriateness of these two kinds of research roles for given situations and given cultural settings.

A further methodological consideration is the definition of the research situation. The alternative roles which the fieldworker may take have direct implications for the way data-gathering situation is defined. In that data-gathering situation where the fieldworker interviews and observes his subjects while that person is engaged in interaction with something or someone other than the researcher, the fieldworker's own presence in the situation is presumably not strongly apparent, or is at least a peripheral and minor element in the data-gathering situation.

In other research situations, the main elements are the fieldworker and informant engaged in direct interaction. But the situation will be defined in different terms according to their mutual roles. It will be seen one way if the role of the researcher is observed mainly in non-research terms—he is viewed as a friend, or a business associate, as a co-member of a group, as a participant in common interests. In such a case, the situation may be defined chiefly in terms of these roles rather than in terms of researcher-informant situation. Or, the fieldworker's activity in the situation may be seen in strictly research terms, it is in terms of his wish to secure information and the subject's willingness to provide it.

The methodological aspects refer to component parts of research techniques in quest of a better understanding of the phenomena which take place in the process of application of social science research. Obviously, methodological investigations are a never-ending process as is all scientific inquiry. As soon as new fields or new areas of specialization impose new quests for knowledge, modern techniques of investigations will evolve and will require methodological scrutiny. In this process of further development and growth of social science, the importance of methodology-mindedness will increase.

As the physician studies anatomy of the human body for enabling him to be in a better position to help men, the methodologist studies research processes for devising better techniques of research. The analogy has been frequently used that what the doctor is to a human being, social science is to society. I am not sure whether such is really the case. No doubt that there are many ills in our frail human

institutions, organizations, societies and nations. No doubt that many social scientists attempt to work in fields conducive to alleviating conflicts, overcoming cultural gaps, and making social and technological change easier to accept. Some are very successful. Social science methodology aims to make it more so in providing the right instruments of research for the proper research situations at the needed time. To do so, deep insight in the component parts of the research process is a prerequisite. A better understanding than presently available is required in basic methodological aspects such as inherent in the process of designing the research investigation; the problem of inductive and deductive analysis; the flexibility of the research question and its influence on the level of proof; amount and appropriateness of context; the role of the investigator; defining the research situation; rapport, verification, and sampling of response; the data-gatherer as a factor affecting the quality of data; the form of the question and the categories of response; position of the question; measures of reliability; anonymity of the data-gatherer. All of these are presently under study by the Cornell Methodology Project. This attempt of sketching some of the connected questions within the framework of today's developmental stage of social science research is only a beginning.

- ¹ Non-published Report by the American Association for Public Opinion Research entitled "Inventory of Research-in-Progress", April, 1954.
- ² B. Berelson, speech delivered on Sponsorship of Social Science Research at the February 1954 meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Issues in New York City.
- ³ Un-published memorandum on Advanced Training in Social Research by Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Robert K. Merton and Kingsley Davis.
- ⁴ Russell L. Ackoff, *The Design of Social Research*, 1953.
- ⁵ Stanley Payne, *The Art of Asking Questions*, 1952.

THE CORNELL-LUCKNOW EVALUATION STUDIES OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

MERRILL R. GOODALL

The Government of India launched simultaneously with the initiation of the community development projects, a programme for evaluation of their administration and impact. An independent evaluation of the action programme was sought and it is worth noting that the agency charged with assessment, the Programme Evaluation Organisation, was made responsible to the Planning Commission and not the Community Development Programme administration. In an effort to add guidance on the methodology of evaluation, Cornell University undertook, toward the end of 1953, an intensive three-year study of the projects in several selected sites. Cornell's field research in India on the implications of technical and other stimulus at the local level is inter-disciplinary in nature and has drawn heavily upon the University's cross- or inter-cultural cooperative research endeavours in Thailand, Peru, and the Southwestern United States. The Cornell study in India is financed by the Ford Foundation and conducted in close collaboration with the University of Lucknow.

Research goals. In particular, the primary objectives of the research are :

- (1) To analyse the process of cultural change;
- (2) To identify significant elements in the village culture which enhance or retard such cultural changes;
- (3) To determine which of these significant elements in the culture can and should be observed systematically in other community project areas;
- (4) In the shortest possible time, to develop and validate simple, easily applied criteria and methods for studying these significant cultural factors;
- (5) To analyse the process by which changes induced by the action programme or stemming from other origins become integrated into and are encompassed by the changing culture;
- (6) To identify the inter-relationship between initial and attendant subsequent changes within the culture, i.e., the nature and mechanism of the 'chain reaction' following upon a given change in behaviour patterns¹.

Evaluation studies of this type are beset with very many practical difficulties. The task of relating results to programmes of the community development administration is a complex one. The connection between means and ends is not easily traced. But to withdraw

¹ This statement of research objectives is drawn from a memorandum of agreement between the Programme Evaluation Organisation and Cornell University.

from the search for evaluation is to withdraw from the endeavour to reach at least a degree of rationality in decision-making, for decisions can be thought of as rational only insofar as the consequences of action can at least approximately be predicted and evaluated.

Research sites. Representatives of the Programme Evaluation Organisation and Cornell University agreed that the initial area for research should be in one of the new community development blocks so that the processes of change induced by the development programme might be studied from the beginning of that programme. Such a community development project had been inaugurated (August 1953) in Deoband Tehsil, Saharanpur District, and interesting research opportunities were evident in Rankhandi village. Research was organized in Rankhandi early in 1954 and in a second but smaller village in the same development block in the latter part of 1954. Work has been started in a control village in Lucknow District, Gohana Kallan, which is not within a community project area. Plans are being finalized for studies in Dudhi, Mirzapur District, in an area substantially dissimilar from the others under observation.

Research procedure. The research laid initial emphasis on the preparation of a baseline study of the entire culture; once the baseline data had been gathered, work tended to focus on agents and factors of culture change, those derived from community development project activities and, as well, those apparently unrelated to such activities. A number of research methods have been found useful; these include structured and unstructured interviews, participant observation, projective tests, the analysis of official records, and others. Considerable baseline materials have been accumulated. The concept of culture, as used in the social sciences—particularly anthropology and sociology plus the knowledge gained about the actual Rankhandi culture have enabled the research team to see the community project administration in perspective and in relation to the many factors which surround and act upon that administration. The administration is thus viewed as part of the culture complex and conditioned by factors of economic technology, systems of values, educational systems, caste and class influences. It is hoped that the agency which seeks to inaugurate and control change will be seen, as much as possible, in its full and changing environment.

It would be presumptuous at this stage in our research to state conclusions, though stock is taken of progress at frequent intervals. Perhaps it will be useful to conclude this cursory presentation by summarizing a few of the major problems and opportunities :

(1) A programme of Government is under survey by the methods and insights of several of the social sciences—anthropology, sociology, economics, social psychology, and others. A challenge to all concerned lies in the creative interchange latent in the coming together

of these various disciplines in the context of a public administration programme.

(2) In exploring intensively a culture in relation to a public administration programme, new problem areas for research are uncovered, many of them hitherto untouched by the practitioner or specialist in public administration. These include the nature of administrative and other communication systems; barriers to effective communication among the parts and levels of the hierarchy; systems of values of the administration and group in society and the interaction of these; leadership and creativity.

Finally, it should be added that the research, for both the Indian and American participants, represents new opportunities for inter-regional and inter-cultural studies. For the administrator it implies a broadening of interests, an awareness of other fields of study, and, eventually, the weaving into programme planning of new knowledge and technique.

SOME ASPECTS OF VILLAGE ECONOMY IN ANCIENT INDIA

(A study based on Sanskrit Buddhist Literature and the Milindapanho)

BAIJ NATH PURI

The existence of a prosperous and flourishing economic life in the period following the Christian era is revealed from the epigraphic records and the exhaustive data from the literature of this period. It would appear from the Periplus of the Erythrean sea that India was commercially linked with the western world. Inland communications were rich and the famous ports of Sopara and Broach were connected with trade centres in the north. Indian civilisation being largely rural, it would be in the fitness of things to assess the contribution of rural economy in the national wealth of the country. There are certain factors which were responsible for the economic prosperity of the country, and we propose taking them into consideration.

Guild Organisation : Economic cooperation is essential for fetching a fair price for produced goods as it avoids undue competition amongst members following a particular profession. It also ensures stability to the producer whose interests are safe in the hands of the trade union organisation. These unions were popularly known as guilds (*śrenis*) under a headman called Śresthin. The existence of such guilds is noticed in the Jatakas and Vinaya texts, as well as in the Brāhmaṇa literature. They continued to exist for thousands of years. An inscription of the Kushana period dated in the year 28 records a deposit of 550 Puranas in each of the two guilds of *samitākara*-wheat flour, and *dhangikā* corn dealers, by a certain lord of Wakhana or Badakshan who had come to Mathura and had set up an endowment for the exclusive welfare of the Brahmins. This inscription suggests that ordinary trade guilds had a respectable status and they also served as indigenous banks, receiving deposits and performing functions according to the stipulations. The Mahāvastu furnishes a list of eighteen trade guilds (*Astādasa Śreni*). They were those of gold-smiths (*suvarnikā*=*hairanyikā*), makers of coral ornaments (*pravārikā*), jewel splendourers (*maniprastārakā*), perfumers (*gandhikā*), oil-millers (*tailikā*), makers of pot for storing ghee (*ghrita kundikā*), makers of molasses (*golikā*) cotton cloth makers (*kārpāsikā*), curd makers (*dadhikā*), makers of candy sugar (*khandakārakā*), sweet confectioners (*modakakārakā*), wheat-flour dealer (*samitākārakā*), grinders of barley meal (*saktukārakā*), fruit-dealers (*phalavanijā*), dealers in roots (*mūlavanijā*), flour grinders (*chūrṇa kūttakā*), dealers in perfumed oil (*gandha tailikā*) and provision dealers (*attavanijā* or *aviddahakā*). Besides these eighteen guilds, mentioned in the Jatakas,

the inscriptions of the period mention another six, namely those of weavers (*śreni kolikānikāya*), potters (*kulairikā*), workers dealing in hydraulic engines (*odayantrikā*), corn dealers (*seni dhamnikā*), bamboo workers (*vasakārā*) and baziers (*kāsakārā*). It seems that there were as many as twenty-four economic guilds, and they were different from those mentioned in the Jatakas. A perusal of the list of guilds convinces us that there was over specialisation in economic professions which were well organised. Thus we find that the flour grinders were different from those of barley meal, dealers in perfumed oil had nothing in common with oil millers. So also were the workers of candy sugar different from the confectioners, and the root dealers from the fruit dealers. It is equally interesting to find a spirit of amity prevailing amongst the members of a particular guild. Disputes, if any, were referred to the headman who acted as an arbitrator.

Over specialisation : There seems to be over specialisation in the economic life of the people with the result that the economic output was great and the finish good. Thus persons dealing in essential and eatable commodities included makers of molasses (*gudapācakā*), makers of honey (*madhukārakā*), dealers in sugar (*sarkaravānijā*), oil millers (*tila-pīdakā*), sesam powder makers (*tila-kūtakā*), sweetmeat-dealers (*ukkarakapānam*), Sellers of cakes (*puvikā*), sellers of fishes (*macchikā*), hawkers of boiled rice (*odanikā*), dealers in spices (*gandhikā-panikā*), dealers in mutton (*aurabham*). Persons selling fuel for domestic consumption were called (*kāsthabanijjam*). Producers of articles were sometimes different from the sellers of those things, as for example fishermen (*balāsikā*) were different from sellers of fishes (*macchikā*), and bee-keepers (*madhu-kārakā*) from dealers in sugar and probably honey (*sarkaravānijā*). Persons belonging to the artisan class included potters (*kumbhakārā*, also mentioned as *ghatikārā*), carpenter (*vardhaki*), bronze utensil makers (*tattakārā*), craftsmen (*śilpikārā*), makers of needle (*suchi-prakshipta*), cutters of precious stones, shell ivory workers (*sankha-dantakārā*), stone carvers (*saila-rūpakārā*) which industry was localised at Mathura. The masons and architects were also graded. The architect was known as *peśalaka*, the brick-layer, *lepaka*, the well digger, *kūpakhānaka*, the mud carrier-*mrittikavāhaka*, the load carrier-*kashtthavāhaka* and the house painter was known as *varnin*. Cottage industries were well developed, as we find references to persons skilled in mechanical art (*śilpika*), workers in mechanics (*yantrakāra*), carriage builders (*rathakara*), weavers (*kuvinda*). The master mechanics known as *karmara-gramika* accepted apprentices who were trained by them. Such pupils were known as *karmāram-antevāsin*. There are references to blacksmiths (*karmara*, also known as *lohākāra* or *ayasakārā*), goldsmiths (*suvarnakārā* or *hiranyakārā*), silversmiths (*rajatakārā*), copper

smiths (*tāmra-kutta*), glass dealers (*śīśapīncatakārā*), lead workers (*śīśakārā*), workers in tin (*tipukārā*), workers in brass (*vattakārā*), tanners (*cammakārā*), ivory workers (*cundā*), carvers in ivory (*dantakārā*). It is rather strange that Indians at present do not manufacture needles, but there are references to needle makers popularly known as (*sūcikārā*). The Mahavastu describes the manufacture of needle by a blacksmith. These references suggest, there was over specialisation as a result of highly developed economic life. There were certain centres noted for their special industry. Thus Mathura was famous for its stone sculptors and Vidisā for its ivory workers. They were also invited by people from other parts of northern India, as we find from a reference to the sculptor Sivarupa of Mathura who carved a beautiful image of Buddha at Śrāvasti.

Improved Agricultural Economy : Agricultural production depends upon the fertility of the land and its right use, proper supervision and vigilance on the part of the farmer and certain other natural factors. According to the poet Asvaghosha, people took resort to agriculture to end their misery. This industry popularly known as *krishi* is prescribed for Vaisyas alone, according to Manu, but there are references to persons of all castes taking to and, thus suggesting vocational mobility. The main consideration of the farmer, known as *karshaka*, was the fertility of the land. In the agricultural village (*krishigrāma*), the arable land was called *khetasamam* which was free from pits, precipices and sewers. The tiller first removed the defects in the soil such as weeds and stones and thorns (*tina, pasāna, kattha*) and then followed gradually the process of ploughing (*kāsitvā*), sowing (*vāpitvā*), irrigating (*sammaudakam pavesetvā*). The fields were properly fenced (*rakkhitvā*), and watched (*gopetvā*), before cutting (*lavana*). The rice fields were provided with canals for irrigation, and there were embankment for storing the water. The seeds were sown according to particular crops the granary was known as *koshtāgārā*. Besides land, labour is equally important in rural economy. One finds references to extra pay (*viśesa vētana*) and also double daily wages which was done to satisfy labour. Even then forced labour (*vishti*) was not unknown. The Saddharna Pundarika refers to employers unwilling to give much to the persons serving under them. The agricultural produce was expected to be very good. It was an age of self-sufficiency, and there was enough left for times of emergency. We do find references to famines and rationing in literature. It is natural for the people getting selfish and the chances of an internal revolt could not be ruled out. Three kinds of famines are mentioned :

Canchu, Svetāsthi and Salākāvritti : In the former the people were kept alive on the grains collected in a box for the pacification of the dead. In the second the bones were boiled and the soup thus

prepared was drunk. In the last type of famine the people collected grains and molasses deposited in holes with sticks, and after boiling them in good quantity of water drank the soup. This suggests that people possessed great stamina which carried them through difficult times when there were no chances of external aid. The state had to take strict measures to meet the catastrophe. The first step in this direction was the collection of food-stuff (*annadyām samhritya*) and after counting and weighing it (*ganayityā, māpayitvā*), it was to be placed in the state grannary (*kosh thāgāram*) in every village, city and townlet. The next step was taking the census of the population for an equitable distribution (*samam bhaktam*). The census was done by the expert in statistics (*ganitakuśala*). The last stage was the equitable distribution which came to one mouthful (*kavado*), according to the *Avādāna Śatāka*, and one *mānikā*, according to the *Divyavadana*, equivalent in both the cases to about 8 ounces. The references suggest that the state was conscious of dangers due to natural circumstances, and allowance had to be made for them. There was no room for foreign aid, and it was really very creditable to turn the corner with the limited internal sources. This was possible only with the combined efforts and sacrifices of the people and the state.

Enterprise, Credit and Cooperation : There is every likelihood of slump if markets could not be secured for the produced goods. This depends upon enterprise, credit and cooperation, and we have to trace references suggesting the extent to which these factors contributed in shaping a progressive economic life. There are many references to caravan traders (*sārthavāha*) who moved out in company under a chief (*sārthavaha-pramūkhā*) or *Śresthi Pramukha*. There are also references to great caravan traders (*mahāsārthavāha*) in the *Divyāvādāna*. The *Avādāna Śatāka* refers to sea faring merchants going in company (*sārthvahamahāsamudramāvatīrṇa*). In the *Divyavadana* there are stories of as many as 500 merchants going together from Sravasti to Sopara, and then sailing from there. It was not unusual for caravans being despoiled by robbers or perishing in deserts. The Buddhist poet mentions a traveller losing his caravans. He also gives credit for the fulfilment of the mission to the excellent guide. The commencement of a sea voyage by a trader or traders was signalled by the blowing of a gong (*ghantā ghoshanam*) inviting others to accompany with articles of merchandise which were carried free of cost and exemption from ferry dues or fares (*sārdham asulkena tarpanyena*). According to *Milindapañho*, Indian ships touched not only coastal towns, but also far off places like Alexandria, and Takkola in the west, and China and Suvarnabhumi in the east. The inland traders known as *otkarikabanig* were no less enterprising. There are references to horse traders coming from Taxila to Banaras, and silk

traders going from Banaras to Alexandria. Barygaza or Broach was linked up with Ujjain and traffic between the north and the south was very common. The *Divyāvadāna* also refers to certain business practices to ensure a fair deal. The deposit of an earnest money (*avadrāṅga*) which was generally $\frac{1}{3}$ of the stipulated price was a condition precedent to the completion of the transaction after which the buyer put his seal on the merchandise. (*Seamudrālakshitam kritvā*). Merchants were not entitled to go in for wholesale transaction, as it was against the spirit of the organisation (*kriyakāra*). The collective enterprise ensured against a sharp rise in prices. Sometimes the merchants used to tell that their stocks were full (*pūrnam kośakoshtha-gārikam*), and the seller had to sell at a considerable discount. When the deal had finished they could fetch a fancy price for their goods.

Credit and banking facilities were well known. The banker called *sresthin* was noted for his usury. The *Millindapanho* mentions several terms like the borrower of a loan (*inagahakā*), the negotiator (*inasā-dhaka*), striken by the debt (*inaghata*), harassment of debt (*inatta*), and final release from debt (*inamokkhā*). The money changers were known as *herannika*. Most of the guilds performed the functions of modern banks. It was due to this spirit of cooperation that capital could be handled properly. The stability of these organisations was unquestionable. The *Saddharma-Pundarika* refers to money lending (*yoga-prayoga*) and interest (*prayoga*).

Stress on Production : The economic prosperity of a country depends upon its productive capacity. If it is producing more than its actual need then in course of time it is bound to be rich. On the other hand if the people are more anxious for their luxuries and less conscious of their productive capacity, the country is bound to go down in due course. The sheet anchor of India's economic life was the stress laid on production. It had captured foreign markets. It supplied articles of luxury to Rome for which the Romans had to pay dearly. Pliny condemning the extravagance of the rich people on perfumes and other luxurious things, pointed out that there was no year in which India did not drain the Roman empire of a hundred million sesosteres. This note of caution by Pliny caused some change in the minds of the people. Sewell attributes the paucity of Roman coins in the south to this change of outlook rather than to the political condition. Warminton, however, doubts any slackness in Indian trade and commerce with Rome, much less the fact that the upper classes desisted from their extravagant tastes. According to him, the tastes of the wealthy were just the same as under Nero. Checking the list of imported and exported articles from India, as one finds in the *Periplus*, one comes to the conclusion that India was more interested in capital goods and gold rather than in articles of luxury. The imported things included thin clothing in large quantity, linens,

topaz, coral, frankin, cense, vessels of glass, silver and gold, plated copper, tin, lead, sweet clover, gold and silver coins, and few articles for presentation to the king at the Barygaza port. The exported things included costus, bdellium, lycium, turquoise, lapis-lazuli, series, skins, cotton cloth, silk yarn and indigo. These things were exported from the Barbaricum port while Barygaza exported a few more things like spikenard (coming from Scythia and Kaspapyrus) agate and cornelian, silk cloth, mallow, cloak, yarn, and long pepper. The list shows that India was anxious to secure foreign markets for her produced goods, and in return she handled raw material and gold. This had made her economy stable. The national wealth of the country considerably increased, and India was more a producer than a consumer. Pliny could foresee this phenomenon and, therefore, he warned his countrymen. Indians were very shrewed and they laid more stress on production than consumption.

We have tried to analyse certain factors that were responsible for building up India's strong economic position both at home and abroad, in the light of the available Indian and foreign evidence. Villages played an equally important part in the economic life of the country. There were no doubt many important cities, but Indian civilisation centred round villages. The organisation of guilds showed to what extent people were alive to the necessity of economic cooperation. There was over specialisation in professions and industries. It is rather strange that some of these cottage industries completely vanished, as for example, needle making for which India has to depend even now on the foreign market. The data from the Sanskrit Buddhist literature shows that agriculture was very well developed. There is yet no reference to the use of Persian wheel which is noticed by Bana in the seventh century A.D., and the term *arghata* is also mentioned in certain inscriptions of the ninth century A.D. There was over production and the country had enough stock to meet any emergency. Credit, cooperation and enterprise are also taken into consideration. People were bold and enterprising, anxious to go over-seas and capture foreign markets. There was enough cooperation and their stamina is commendable. If India could build her economic position in the world market, it was due to several factors to which the state and the people contributed alike.

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For certain reasons references are avoided in this paper. The subject of guild organisation was first handled by Dr. and Mrs. Rhys Davids, and later on it was treated by Drs. Radha Kumud Mookerji and R. C. Majumdar. The list of eighteen trade guilds mentioned in

this paper is not to be found in any of these works. I published a short article on it in the 'Indian Culture', Vol. XXII, I also published an article on 'Famine and Rationing in Sanskrit Buddhist Literature' in the same journal. A paper by Dr. Moti Chandra on 'Rationing and Famine relief in Ancient India', appears in the Journal of the U.P. Historical Society, Vol. XVII, in which he has utilised this source also.



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